

A PROFOUND MYSTERY

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A PROFOUND MYSTERY

The Use of the Old Testament in Ephesians

BY

THORSTEN MORITZ



E.J. BRILL
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*In loving memory of my father
and as an encouragement to my dear mother*

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

OBJECTIVES

The Epistle to the Ephesians is not usually regarded as stemming from Paul's pen. Perhaps this is the main reason why there has been little scholarly interest in its use of the Hebrew Scriptures.¹ Many scholars have assumed that even if the letter is genuinely Pauline, the bulk of Paul's OT quotations are to be found in the undisputed letters. However, it is an astonishing but unnoticed fact that Ephesians, which is of comparable length to Galatians, incorporates more OT words and phrases than the latter.² The marginal references of the Nestle-Aland edition of the Greek text confirm this. The present study of the use of the OT in Ephesians aims to fill a gap in scholarly exploration of this fascinating epistle, it has several aims. First, it hopes to contribute towards a balanced evaluation of the diversity of traditions employed in Ephesians. This will allow, secondly, a better appraisal of the author's religio-cultural background than hitherto. Third, the appropriation of OT material will be related to what can be assumed to have been the background of the recipients. The question of the ethnic composition of the recipients, for instance, is pertinent to any satisfactory interpretation of ch 2.11-22³ and therefore of the entire epistle. Fourth, the author's hermeneutic will be related to that of Paul. Since the authorship problem does not lie at the centre of this study, I shall comment on it only in those cases where the

¹ Scholars have tended to direct their attention towards discovering hellenistic influences on Ephesians. For a survey of traditions in Ephesians cf Barth, "Traditions". Lincoln, "Use" provides the only extensive study of Old Testament quotations in Ephesians, though he does not discuss allusions.

² Cf Morgenthaler's statistic, based on NA²⁵, which counts 2229 words for Ephesians and 2418 words for Galatians, that is less than 8% difference. Strangely Koch, *Zeuge*, 4 notes a lack of OT material in Ephesians in what is otherwise an excellent study.

³ On the assumption of post-Pauline authorship it becomes difficult to relate the author's comments on ethnicity and ecclesiology to a specific *Sitz im Leben*. For an attempt to resolve this difficulty cf Fischer, *Tendenz*. A full history of interpretation of this passage is given by Rader, *Hostility*.

author's appropriation of OT material has a bearing on the authorship discussion.

DEFINING CATEGORIES

It has always been notoriously difficult to distinguish in an exact fashion between quotations and allusions. I shall use the term 'quotation' to refer to passages in which several words have been taken over directly from the *Vorlage* with little or no variation. In other words, the origin of the expressions taken over must be traceable beyond doubt. This purely technical criterion must be supplemented by evidence which suggests that the intended recipients would have been likely to appreciate the OT provenance of at least those instances where the appropriation of such material was deliberate. In order to supply such evidence it will be vital to study possible contextual links between *Vorlage* and appropriation. Alternatively, an investigation into the history of interpretation of the text quoted may yield evidence which suggests that the *Vorlage* would have been well-known to the intended recipients.⁴

While it will not be difficult to use these criteria to isolate quotations, 'allusions' are by definition more difficult to pin down.⁵ The danger of suspecting OT allusions behind everyday language must be avoided.⁶ Allusions, as I shall use the term, are those instances where just one or two words or one short phrase coincide with a specific OT text, but where it can nevertheless be shown that a direct link between text and *Vorlage* exists. There is little point at this stage in setting out more specific criteria. The total number of such direct links within Ephesians is probably twelve or thirteen. Each case will have to be discussed on its own merits.

There is a further category which I would refer to as 'concepts'. Concepts are links between a NT text and the Hebrew Scriptures which are neither as direct as quotations or allusions, nor as vague as general influences of style.⁷ The main examples would include: the

⁴ As a general rule it may be argued that when the quoting author builds an extensive argument on his appropriation of OT material without introducing it explicitly, it can nevertheless be assumed that he expected his audience to appreciate the OT link. Occasionally the same applies to allusions. Subtlety in the way OT material is appropriated may well point to the author's confidence in the readers' ability to relate *text* to *Vorlage*.

⁵ Cf Paulien, "Allusions", 37-53.

⁶ Maurer, "Schlüssel", 158 and 167-72 appears to have yielded to this temptation when he affirmed no less than 44 direct links between Ephesians and the OT.

⁷ Such styles or genres would include the possibility of classifying Eph 1.3-14 as a Jewish *berakah* (cf O'Brien, "Ephesians I", 504-10).

election motif couched in the form of a Hebrew *berakah* (ch 1.3-14); the Temple imagery at the end of ch 2; the "mystery" (1.9; 3.4,5,9; 5.32), and the "fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (5.2). Needless to say, this category can only be used to supplement information based on studying quotations and allusions. For the present study it is secondary in importance and will be discussed only in relation to quotations and allusions. A good example of such *conceptual* links is the Temple imagery at the end of Eph 2. It underlines the potential of studying OT material in Ephesians for assessing the letter's religious background. Jewish readers would immediately have related the imagery to the Jerusalem Temple. Western Asia Minor gentiles, on the other hand, would probably have taken the all-dominating Artemision at Ephesus as the point of reference. Was Ephesians an exercise in rhetorical contextualisation? To find out we shall be concentrating on those instances where NT text and OT *Vorlage* can be compared.

Mention must be made of one further approach to possible OT influence on a NT letter. 'Intertextual Echoes' refers to the fine tuning aspects of literary or indeed contextual influence of one text, including its history of interpretation, on another. The term stems from a discussion among literary critics such as Bloom, Kristeva and Barthes.⁸ It was Hays who recently introduced this concept into the study of Paul's use of the OT.⁹ The aim is to perceive the more finely tuned signals which emerge when the voice of an earlier work is echoed. Such signals may indicate continuity between the discursive and (religio-)cultural aspects of the *Vorlage* and the background of the intended recipients.¹⁰ The aim is to pick up what Hollander calls "the cave of resonant signification",¹¹ aspects that are often overlooked when focusing exclusively on the technical side of intertextuality. This approach is not at the heart of this particular study, but it will occasionally be employed in elucidating the finer detail of intertextual relationships between Ephesians and a variety of OT passages.

⁸ Bloom, *Anxiety*; Kristeva, "Semiotike" and Barthes, *Theory*. A helpful discussion of these matters is by Culler, "Presuppositions", 100-18.

⁹ Hays, *Echoes*.

¹⁰ Culler, "Presuppositions", 103.

¹¹ Hollander, *Figure*, 65.

HISTORICAL PARAMETERS

A detailed knowledge of the circumstances of the addressees is desirable as it should enable us to see how far the traditions used have been employed because of their religio-cultural suitability. The author may have chosen particular OT motifs and phrases because of similarities between their original *Sitz* or context and the background of his audience. Unfortunately it is not possible to be certain of the letter's intended audience.

On the basis of chs 2.11 and 3.1 it is usually thought that Ephesians was addressed exclusively to gentiles. However, could these verses not point to the fact that there were also ethnic Jews among the largely gentile Christian audience? In other words, the author may well have pointed out that he addresses specifically the gentile believers in chs 2.11ff and 3.1ff precisely because the letter's audience, though predominantly gentile, may also have included Jewish believers. If, as seems likely, the letter was intended for more than one congregation, perhaps as a circular, this possibility must not be ruled out. Where the author supports his argument with the help of OT material, it will have to be considered to what extent this can be explained on the basis of the presence of gentile God-fearers or former proselytes among the intended audience.

The alternative would of course be the assumption that the use of the OT was motivated by an ethnically Jewish element among the intended Christian audience.¹² Support for this possibility might be adduced from the first verse of the letter which speaks of the τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς οὖσιν []¹³ καὶ πιστοῖς. This separation of saints and

¹² This view finds further support in chs 3.6,8 and 4.17 where τὰ ἔθνη are referred to in the third person rather than in the second person. Quite possibly ch 4.17 refers to Jewish Christians with an 'ethically Gentile' past (for a different view cf Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 276). The question of the varying uses of *we* and *you* throughout the epistle will be considered as part of the discussion of ch 2.13-17.

¹³ In his thorough discussion of this well known textual crux, Best sets out the three most plausible options as follows:

p ⁴⁶ :	τοῖς ἁγίοις οὖσιν καὶ πιστοῖς
κ*, B*, 1739:	τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς οὖσιν καὶ πιστοῖς
κ ² , A:	τοῖς ἁγίοις τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ἐφεσῶ καὶ πιστοῖς

The second reading, while being the *lectio difficilior*, is grammatically not viable and hardly goes back to the autograph. That the phrase ἐν Ἐφεσῶ is not original is commonly accepted. This leaves us with p⁴⁶ which finds some support in D. This link is interesting because there is no direct connection between these manuscripts (Zuntz, *Text*, 41). The somewhat awkward οὖσιν could be accounted for as *Kanzleisprache* (Mayser in Best, "Ephesians i.1", 35). Best's objection that this would imply an unrestricted readership begs the question. The unrestricted readership can be argued as a possibility despite chs 2.11 and 3.1. The suggestion of *Kanzleisprache* can be underpinned by the observation that the beginning and the

believers has perplexed commentators.¹⁴ The former might plausibly stand for Jewish believers (Rom 15.26; 1 Cor 16.1 and 2 Cor 9.1). This is the case in Eph 2.19 where gentile Christians are called fellow citizens of the saints (Jews). The objection that this ignores the previous verses which affirm the unity of both groups is invalid. It may be precisely because of the fact that there had been two groups that unity had to be brought about. Eph 2.19 combines a reference to fellow citizens with a reference to the old ethnic distinction. This reference to both ethnic groups may have been necessary because it was a live issue among the addressees. Is this consistent with what we know about Western Asia Minor?

Following Lightfoot's generally valuable comments on the Lycus valley, it has been assumed by most scholars that every city in Asia Minor was characterised by a major Jewish influence. Yet we have reason to doubt whether this was true, for instance, of Colossae.¹⁵ In Ephesus, as, indeed, in Laodicea, there was a considerable Jewish contingent.¹⁶ This raises the very old suggestion, going back to Marcion (140 AD), which identifies Ephesians with the Letter to the Laodicean mentioned in Col 4.16. This view still has more adherents than is often realised.¹⁷ Unless we accept this hypothesis, we are forced to conclude that the letter mentioned in Colossians has been lost. Much more importantly, despite the fact that the writer of Colossians had sent a letter to the Laodiceans, he asks the Colossians to pass on his greetings to them. The inconsistency is somewhat rectified if Ephesians—which lacks any personal note—is identical with the letter sent to Laodicea. This could be combined with the

conclusion of the epistle feature the third person singular as opposed to the second person singular found in the conclusions of other letters in the Pauline corpus.

¹⁴ See Kümmel, *Einleitung*, 312.

¹⁵ In his very recent study on *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor* Trebilco does not even see any reason to include Colossae in his index. While the lack of archaeological evidence is not surprising—the mound of Colossae has not yet been fully excavated—the lack of literary evidence is more decisive. We have a lot of literary evidence of a Jewish presence in numerous other cities (cf Schürer, *History* III.1, 17-36), but not in Colossae. This apparent difference in ethnic composition can be explained on the basis of the declining status of Colossae at the time. In contrast, Laodicea and Apamea, for instance, were thriving cities (Trebilco, *Communities*, 85ff - cf Josephus, *Antiquities*, 3.4.143-53). The lack of evidence of a Jewish presence in Colossae is vital for any attempted explanation of the relationship between Ephesians and Colossians.

¹⁶ Trebilco, *Communities*, 17.

¹⁷ See the lists of scholars who regard this as a real possibility in Bruce, *Colossians*, 184 n68 and Kümmel, *Einleitung*, 311.

'circular' hypothesis which argues that Ephesians was sent to various communities, hence the lacuna in ch 1.1.¹⁸

It is by no means impossible that Marcion's view and the early association of Ephesians with Ephesus are correct.¹⁹ An identification of Ephesians with the letter to the Laodiceans would go a long way towards accounting for the large overlap between Ephesians and Colossians. Laodicea, unlike Colossae, enjoyed a significant Jewish presence. Yet, the two cities are not far apart and this would explain the general overlap between the two epistles (cf also Col 4.16). The possibly different ethnic composition, if substantiated, could account for the high proportion of OT material in Ephesians and the virtual lack of it in Colossians. This proposal is well worth considering.²⁰

METHODOLOGICAL PARAMETERS

In what follows, I will set out the major areas to be examined in this study of the appropriation of Scriptural material in Ephesians. It will, however, neither be necessary nor indeed helpful to cover each of these areas in connection with every single text studied; they will be discussed selectively as appropriate. First, regardless of the precise location of the intended audience, we have a fairly realistic picture of the general religio-cultural background of the recipients. The Ephesian Artemis cult was such an all-pervasive and all-dominating power in Asia Minor that it is safe to see the recipients against such a backcloth.²¹ This raises for example the question of the relationship between the use of the Scriptures for ethical parenesis (5.31; 6.2f) and the ethical values of the pagan environment of the addressees.

A second factor to be taken into account is the widespread view that Ephesians (in particular chs 1.20ff, 2.13-17 and 5.14; ch 4.8 possibly also) incorporates early Christian traditional material. An

¹⁸ The argument that no manuscripts that mention a location have survived is valid but not very strong. If Tychicus took the letter with him on his trip (Eph 6.21; cf Col 4.7), such a specification would have been unnecessary.

¹⁹ Recently Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 3f revived and significantly modified van Roon's proposal which developed Harnack's Laodicea hypothesis which in turn goes back to Marcion. Lincoln suggests that the redundant καὶ in Eph 1.1 originally connected the two place names which were subsequently omitted to 'catholisise' the letter. He plausibly speculates in the light of the significant overlap between the endings of Ephesians and Colossians that the autograph may have included the names Hierapolis and Laodicea.

²⁰ I have suggested this possibility in some detail in "Reasons for Ephesians" in *Evangel* 14.1 (1996).

²¹ The major recent work to relate Ephesians to this background is Arnold's *Ephesians*. My own contribution to the debate on the religio-cultural background of Ephesians is "Summing up", 88-111.

issue arising out of this is how far Scriptural dependence and early Christian traditional influence may have combined to produce a particular text or verse.

Third, occasionally it will be necessary to consult textual witnesses other than the main MT or LXX manuscripts. Although Beckwith has recently criticised²² the long-held standard view that a diversity of Pharisaic, Samaritan, Alexandrian and Essene canons lay before the early church, there were nevertheless various Greek versions²³ of individual OT books widely available and used by NT authors.²⁴ In the case of Eph 4.8-10 we will also have to examine a relatively late Targumic tradition. Additionally, a comparison of the NT use of OT material with that found in pseudepigraphical as well as rabbinic sources will repeatedly prove fruitful.

Leading on from these observations is the field of testimonies and regard or disregard for context by the quoting author. The testimony book hypothesis put forward by Harris has been modified by Dodd, who argued that NT authors show a high regard for the original co-text/context of OT quotations and allusions.²⁵ One of his major critics, Sundberg,²⁶ has himself been severely criticised by Marshall,²⁷ who maintains that Sundberg's statistics can be taken to support rather than contradict Dodd's claims. It must be recognised that an author may make use of Scriptural material for co-textual reasons. For example, a specific verse might be quoted because of its function as a resumé of a vital narrative unit in the *Vorlage*, with the aim of reminding the readership of a particular event in Israel's history.²⁸ This is clearly another matter to be addressed throughout this study.

Fifth, since the author's Jewish background is beyond doubt, there will be some benefit in comparing his interpretative endeavours with other Jewish exegetical practice. However, while it has been fashionable to speak of midrashic expositions in the NT along the

²² Beckwith, *Canon*, 435-7.

²³ It is worth noting that the use of codices as opposed to papyrus scrolls is unlikely for the first century AD and was certainly not widespread (McCown, "Codex", 235). Mnemonic techniques were, however, widespread. This has been shown by Riesner, "Lehrer", 148f, 440-53 following Gerhardsson. Nevertheless, the 'mnemonic apology' for textual deviations can be no more than a last resort.

²⁴ For Paul's use of the Greek OT see Koch, *Zeuge*, 48-91.

²⁵ The discussion about *context* led to an exchange of articles by Edgar, "Respect", 55-62 and Mead, "Opinion", 279-89.

²⁶ Sundberg, "Testimonies", 268-81.

²⁷ Marshall, "Developments", 6.

²⁸ A good example of this is 1 Cor 10.7 where the inconspicuous phrase "the people sat down... to play" recalls the whole Golden calf incident reported in Exodus 32 (cf v6).

lines of rabbinic practice,²⁹ it remains doubtful whether we should understand the seven and thirteen *middoth* of Rabbi Hillel and Rabbi Ishmael as exegetical rules.³⁰ In any case, as Hays points out, only two of the thirteen 'rules' are relevant for NT studies.³¹ To use Neusner's words, the rabbis often regarded their *Vorlage* as 'colour' rather than as 'painting'. As this does not appear to be the norm in the NT,³² caution must be exercised in making comparisons.

Sixth, how much continuity or discontinuity can we expect between NT appropriation of the *Vorlage* and what was perceived by contemporaries as its original intended meaning? The danger in attempting to answer this question is that of reading one text into the other, thus minimising potential tension. But if this temptation is resisted, real benefit emerges. It is only by engaging in such study that the arbitrary nature of *a priori* claims which effectively negate a NT author's knowledge of his *Vorlage* and its interpretative history can be overcome. In short, in at least some cases an exegetical study of the underlying OT text will be desirable.

Finally, a note on the matters of authorship and the letter's relationship with Colossians. One of the few studies of the use of the OT in Ephesians persuaded its author, A. Lincoln, of the non-Pauline character of this epistle. Some of the OT texts alluded to in Ephesians can be paralleled in Romans and 1 Corinthians. A study of OT traditions in Ephesians is unlikely to be sufficient to comment conclusively on the matter of authorship, but occasionally the present study will refer to Lincoln's decision. Where no parallels in the undisputed Pauline letters can be furnished, synoptic comparisons with Colossians can play a vital role. Paradoxically this is because, despite their closeness, these Colossian parallels do not involve any significant traces of OT material.³³ This phenomenon confirms the relevance of the present investigation for any examination of the relationship between Ephesians and Colossians.

²⁹ Ellis, "Prophecy", 147ff.

³⁰ It may well be more accurate to speak of exegetical options rather than of rigid rules (cf Hays, *Echoes*, 12).

³¹ *Gezerah shawah* and *qal wahomer* (ibid, 13).

³² Paul shows awareness of rabbinic allegories only twice (Gal 4.21-31 and 1 Cor 10.4), and it can be argued that he took up a rabbinic strand of interpretation polemically, rather than endorsing a particular kind of method (Caird, *Language*, 180f).

³³ This must probably be interpreted in relation to the letters' respective envisaged audiences (cf Moritz, "Reasons").

CHAPTER TWO

PSALMS 110.1 AND 8.7 IN EPHESIANS 1.20-23

"...when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church."

In Eph 1.20-23 we find a rare combination of resurrection and exaltation motifs.¹ Nevertheless, scholars frequently claim that the phrases from Ps 110 and Ps 8 found in this passage have been taken over from earlier Christian exegetical traditions.² I accept that the inspiration to use these particular texts comes from early Christian reflection on the resurrection and the exaltation.³ But this must not automatically lead to the *a priori* assumption that Eph 1.20ff is based on earlier traditions. I shall argue that vv20-23 may well be the result of the author's own awareness of and original reflection on the two Psalms.

As is well known, Ps 110.1 is the most frequently cited OT verse in the NT.⁴ Most of these texts, including Eph 1, overlap with the Psalm through the phrase *Καθου ἐκ δεξιῶν* only. Some of the texts are irrelevant for this study as they are hardly direct quotations of Ps 110.⁵ In comparing the remaining texts, the variety of verbs and verb

¹ According to Hahn, *Hoheitstitel*, 130 the exaltation motif gradually replaced the resurrection motif as a result of the delay of the parousia. To maintain this view, he has to speak of a de-eschatologising of the 'sitting at the right hand' motif in Ephesians.

² Hay, *Glory*, 50 Lincoln, "Use", 41; Loader, "Christ", 199-217. Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 78 and Gnllka, *Epheser*, 96 among others speak of "Pauline tradition"—but this is based primarily on considerations to do with authorship.

³ Cf Acts 2.33f; 5.31; Rom 8.34; 1 Cor 15.20,25; Eph 1.20; Col 3.1 and Heb 10.12; 12.2.

⁴ Mark 12.36; Matt 22.44; Luke 20.42 and Acts 2.34. Part of the verse is also quoted in Heb 1.13 and in 1 Cor 15.25.

⁵ Acts 5.31; 7.56; Rom 8 and 1 Pet 3.22.

forms is striking.⁶ Also, ἐν δεξιᾷ is sometimes located in heaven or high above, but sometimes not (Rom 8; Col 3; Heb 10; 12). Some texts add τοῦ Θεοῦ (Rom 8; Col 3; 1 Pet 3); others τῆς μεγαλωσύνης (Heb 1; 8), αὐτοῦ (Eph 1.20) and τῆς δυνάμεως (Mark 14). The freedom reflected in this variety was created, in part, by the necessity to change the direct speech of Ps 110 (LXX) either to indirect speech or to some kind of theologoumenon. The fact that we do not find a single formulaic version suggests, however, that the variety was due to individual writers appropriating the OT text differently, rather than being the result of traditional influence.⁷ The only phrase which can confidently be ascribed to early Christian common stock is ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Whether the combination of Pss 110.1 and 8.7 is as widely attested as is often thought will have to be examined. But before that it will be helpful to note some specific features of the use of these texts in Ephesians to assess its degree of independence. First, the sitting motif is related to a heavenly scene.⁸ Second, the subjection motif is connected with the headship of Christ over all things and for the church.⁹ Third, the "enemies" (cf Ps 110.1) are clearly interpreted as evil powers and principalities (cf 2.2).¹⁰ Fourth, as in 1 Cor 15.25, Ephesians displays an interest in the time span envisaged in the Psalm. While the same applies to the use of this Psalm in Heb 10.13, it would be out of the question to posit a pre-Pauline interpretative stratum which underlies all of these texts. Hebrews features elsewhere¹¹ a variety of demonstrably independent usages of Ps 110.

Juel's assertion, following Hay, that the reference to the sitting at the right hand "became an established feature of Christian tradition and could be employed without reference to its Scriptural origin",¹² has to be treated with some caution. Each occurrence must be considered individually.

⁶ Mark 14.62 and Col 3.1 have the pres. ptc. καθήμενον, Heb 8.1 and 10.12 the aor. ind. ἐκάθισεν; Heb 12.2 the perf. ind. κακάθικεν and Eph 1.20 the aor. ptc. καθίσας whereas Acts 7.56 has ἑστῶτα.

⁷ Even Hay, *Glory*, 43 is forced to concede this. For a different view see Loader, "Christ", 209.

⁸ Cf only Heb 8.1 and 1 Pet 3.22.

⁹ This goes beyond the scope of Rom 8.34,37 and 1 Cor 15.24.

¹⁰ Interestingly, Ephesians here depends on a phrase within Ps 110.1 which it does not quote, but which is alluded to in 1 Cor 15.25. As this is the only occurrence of this phrase in the NT, Ephesians can be assumed not to have depended on common early Christian stock at this point.

¹¹ Chs 5.5,10; 6.20; 7.3,11,15,21.

¹² Juel, *Exegesis*, 149.

As there are no grave textual difficulties with the Hebrew and Greek versions of the relevant OT texts nor with Eph 1.20-23 itself,¹³ I shall move on to a more detailed investigation under the following headings:

Indirect Sources?

The Combination of Psalms 110.1 and 8.7 in the New Testament

Psalm 8.7 in the New Testament

Scriptural *Vorlagen* and their History of Interpretation and Effect

The Appropriation of Scripture in Ephesians 1.20-3

A Possible Background for Ephesians 1

Ephesians 1.20-3 and the Authorship Question

Conclusion

INDIRECT SOURCES?

In attempting to trace some of the influences on the role of Pss 8.7 and 110.1 in the NT, Hay claims that two categories above all played a formative part. We need to examine the significance of these in order to assess the author's degree of originality in appropriating parts of these Psalms.

Under *Scriptural Testimonies* Hay lists only one NT text (Heb 1.13) and two extra-Biblical texts (Barn 12.10f and 1 Clem 36). He is aware of the objection that the latter two are dependent on the former. Nevertheless, he points to theological differences between them in order to postulate a common source which may go back to NT times. He further argues that the combination of Ps 110.1 and Isa 45.1 in Barn 12 must originate from an earlier collection since the text from Isaiah interrupts rather than underlines the argument even in its altered form. Against Hay I would suggest a more natural explanation for the altered text: the author wished to assimilate Isa 45.1 to Ps 110.1 which was far too well known to be altered.

Hay's second category is that of early hymns or creeds. In 1 Pet 3.22 ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ Θεοῦ can readily be conceded as reflecting tradition of some general nature. The same applies to Polycarp's *Ep Phil* 2.1 (ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ). All that these texts really show is that

¹³ It is true that the MT of Ps 110 is generally in a rather corrupt state. Nevertheless this does not apply to v1. As for Eph 1.20, D, F 1 and G changed the participle καθίσας to the indicative ἐκάθισεν (a probable assimilation to Ps 110). Sinaiticus and A read καθίσας and 292 inserts αὐτόν. P, B, 1739 and others also read καθίσας, but leave out αὐτόν. The correct reading is probably καθίσας. Whether αὐτόν is to be included or not has no impact on this study.

the core motif of *preposition* + δεξιός + *divine genitive* was widespread and goes back to a very early date.¹⁴

Heb 1.2f has been claimed to reflect a hymnic *Vorlage*.¹⁵ The full quotation of Ps 110.1bc in Heb 1.13 follows LXX closely, whereas chs 1.3; 8.1; 10.12 and 12.2, which are interested in 1b only, deviate from LXX. Michel comments that within Hebrews a confessional formula militates against LXX.¹⁶ A simpler explanation is that the LXX reading is retained wherever the NT quotes Ps 110.1 more or less fully, with changes taking place only when v1b is in view. It is in these cases that ἐν δεξιᾷ replaces ἐκ δεξιῶν, thus assimilating the text to the Hebrew לְיְמִינִי. The author had access to the LXX version, but felt free to adapt as appropriate.

Hay's claim that "the sheer superfluity" of "Christ sits at the right hand" in Col 3.1 points to its traditional nature,¹⁷ is beside the point. Col 3.1-4 clearly sum up the first half of the epistle while, at the same time, re-focusing on what is to come.¹⁸ The phrase is also framed on either side by the admonition to "seek the things above" and can, therefore, hardly be described as superfluous.

THE COMBINATION OF PSS. 110.1 AND 8.7 IN THE NT

The earliest such combination is testified in 1 Cor 15.25-27, even though Paul is interested only in v1c. The only two other possibilities are not nearly as straightforward (Heb 1 and 2; 1 Pet 3.22).¹⁹

Heb 1.13 and 2.6-8 are separated by six verses. Despite the fact that the verses in-between provide a topical link between the uses of Pss 110 and 8, namely the superiority of Christ over the angels,²⁰ they form only part of a whole string of Psalm citations.²¹ Ps 110.1

¹⁴ Hahn, *Hoheitstitel*, 128.

¹⁵ Michel, *Hebräer*, 44; Fuller, *Foundations*, 220f and also Deichgräber, *Gottes hymnus*, 137-40.

¹⁶ Michel, *Hebräer*, 45.

¹⁷ Hay, *Glory*, 40.

¹⁸ O'Brien, *Colossians*, 158.

¹⁹ Strictly speaking Mark 12.36par needs to be mentioned as well. It quotes Ps 110.1 *in extenso*, but replaces ὑποπόδιον by ὑποκάτω (cf Ps. 8.7). But it is doubtful whether one can assume influence from Ps 8 on the basis of a single preposition, especially as the remainder of the quotation (τῶν ποδῶν σου) agrees with Ps 110 against Ps 8.

²⁰ Pace Lindars, *Apologetic*, 50.

²¹ V2 - Ps 2.8; v3 - Ps 110.1; v5 - Ps 2.7; v6 - Ps 97.7; v7 - Ps 104.4; vv8f - Ps 45.6; vv10-12 - Ps 102.25-27; v13 - Ps 110.1; v14 - Pss 34.7; 91.11; ch 2.6-8 - Ps 8.5-7.

clinches the argument of ch 1 and is thus more closely linked to what precedes it than to what follows. If indeed Ps 110.1 had been deliberately combined with any one of the other Psalms in particular, more likely candidates than Ps 8 would have been Ps 102.25-27 on the basis of proximity, or Ps 2.7 on the basis of the same introductory formula. A deliberate combination of specifically Pss 110.1 and 8.7 in Heb 1 and 2 is not very likely.²²

1 Pet 3.22 reproduces language which ultimately goes back to Ps 110.1. The extent to which it also shows influence of Ps 8.7 is uncertain. The only verbal link consists of ὑποταγέντων which compares with ὑπέταξας ὑποκάτω in Ps 8.7 and with ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν (Ps 110.1). On lexical grounds this verse is, therefore, slightly closer to Ps 8.7 than to Ps 110.1. But traces of Ps 110.1 are found in the first part of the verse and Ps 110.1 ("enemies") provides a more natural basis for spelling out the principalities and powers (cf v22).²³ One can cite Heb 10.12f and 1 Clem 36.5f as examples of associating the "enemies" of Ps 110.1b with the subjection of 'powers' without resorting to Ps 8. Therefore, even where there is technically a combination of Pss 110 and 8, we are probably justified only in speaking of a degree of terminological influence (ὑποταγέντων), rather than of a deliberate or conscious combination.

PS 8 IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

It remains to clarify whether Ephesians employed Ps 8.7 independently, and if so, to what extent. In view of the rare use of the Psalm elsewhere, to assume that this Psalm played a major role in the early church is clearly not warranted.²⁴ Dunn points out twice that a christological exegesis of this Psalm "probably predated" Paul's letters. But he fails to give reasons for this estimate.²⁵ Conzelmann puts forward a similar view but supports it only by pointing to the

²² The argument that Hebrews is dependent on a florilegium is equally shaky. The clearest such example would be the Midrash on Ps 2.9 (Ps 110.1 and Ps 2.9) and the combination of Ps 110.1 with 2 Sam 7.10-14 in 4QFlor. But Ps 8 does not feature in these texts.

²³ Pace Lindars, *Apologetic*, 50 and Dunn, *Making*, 108f. It is not at all clear why Lindars also wants to link Ps 110.1 with Ps 8.7 in Phil 3.21.

²⁴ Hays' comment that interpretations of this Psalm were "widely influential in the early church" (*Echoes*, 84) is wide of the mark.

²⁵ Dunn, *Making*, 110f. To point to the Adamic background of Rom 5 and 1 Cor 15 is not sufficient.

"matter of course" reflected in Paul's interpretation of Ps 8.²⁶ Considering the interpretative potential opened up by the mention of a son of man in Ps 8.5, the lack of prominence of the Psalm in the NT is all the more surprising. The reason for this lack of interest is likely to be the recognition in the early church that the Psalm is not inherently messianic. Apart from Eph 1, the only clear instances of where this Psalm is used are Mt 21.16, Heb 2.6ff and 1 Cor 15.27.

The main argument against an independent use of the Psalm in Ephesians is the alleged combination of this Psalm with Ps 110.1 in places other than 1 Cor 15. But this I have rejected earlier. In fact, the opposite could be argued: the lack of prominence of Ps 8 in the NT favours the view that the combination of this Psalm with Ps 110 was prominent in the mid fifties and possibly early sixties AD only within the Pauline tradition. Hebrews could have been written at any time between the late seventies and the last decade of the first century and is clearly too late to warrant the assumption of a pre-Pauline combination of Pss 110 and 8.²⁷ Hebrews may well have taken up a Pauline tradition at this point.

SCRIPTURAL *VORLAGEN* AND THEIR HISTORY OF EFFECT

If the claim that Eph 1.20-23 may well result from the author's own reflection on Pss 110.1 and 8.7 is correct, it follows that we must pay some attention to the OT texts themselves in order to recover the author's logic in employing them. It might of course be argued that the writer's reflection is based not on the OT as text, but on its first century Christian potential, ie its relevance and use in the social context of early Christianity. Although there is some merit in this argument, it would seem precipitate at this point to drive a wedge between original intention of the OT text and its first century understanding, mediated or not.²⁸ Differences between the two may

²⁶ Conzelmann, *1 Korinther*, 335. But see Koch, *Schrift*, 245 n22.

²⁷ Koch, *Schrift*, 245.

²⁸ Given that the Jewish Scriptures were indeed the Bible of the early church (Dodd), such an approach seems reductionist. It succeeds primarily in showing what it presupposes, ie that the OT texts as texts interpreted by the modern interpreter are largely irrelevant for modern NT study. This widespread view has for long characterised the study of the Jewish Scriptures in the NT. But a sound hermeneutic of authorial intent allows at least for the possibility of some continuity between the original intention on the part of the OT writer, first century interpretations of OT texts and even modern attempts of interpreting the Jewish Scriptures. Hence we must be prepared to examine the entire range of OT text, its history of interpretation and

emerge as a result of this study; they certainly should not form its presupposition.

The fact that passages dealing with the subjection of evil powers (Eph 1.20-23; 1 Cor 15.25-27) should combine references to Pss 110.1 and 8.7 is hardly surprising. Ps 110.1b provides the logical link between v1a and Ps 8.7:

Ps 110.1a Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τῷ μου
 b κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου
 c ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου
 8.7b πάντα ὑπετάξας ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ

The term ὑποπόδιον presupposes the high throne of a ruler. The same picture is assumed in Ps 8.7. Ps 110.1c provides the topical link between the two texts. Consequently, both Eph 1 and 1 Cor 15 preserve the order Ps 110 - Ps 8.7. Both NT texts are interested specifically in the one element of Ps 8.7 (πάντα) which goes beyond Ps 110.1 (τοὺς ἐχθρούς). The two Psalms are further linked by the argument that God provides the ἰϛ (power) which is necessary to defeat the enemy (cf 8.3). ἰϛ is granted by God in answer to prayer (cf Pss 86.16f and 110.2).²⁹

The messianic understanding of Ps 110.1 in early Christianity grew out of Jesus' reported use of the Psalm in Mark 12.36par and probably also 14.62par. Ever since Gunkel's widely accepted criticism of a post-exilic dating of the Psalm,³⁰ the king addressed has been interpreted as a pre-exilic Israelite monarch. But the Psalm speaks in uncharacteristically high terms of the king. YHWH himself exalts him to his right hand and thus invites him to share his rule.³¹ V3 speaks of the heavenly birth of the king with YHWH being his father. He will be an eternal Priest after the order of Melchisedek, and he will exercise God's judgment over other nations and kings. Kraus is, therefore, justified in his criticism of Gressmann's categorical rejection of a messianic interpretation of the Psalm.³²

its socio-religious significance for NT authors. Only such a study can show the degree of (dis-)continuity inherent in the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of a given OT text.

²⁹ If Dahood's suggestion (*Psalms*, 114) that ἰϛ means "fortress" and denotes God's abode in heaven is correct, the link with Ps 110 would be strengthened.

³⁰ Gunkel, *Psalmen*, 484-6

³¹ This is rather surprising, despite Dahood's objection (*Psalms*, 114). David had only been promised "a name great, like the names of the greatest men of the earth".

³² Kraus, *Psalmen II*, 933 and 938. Strangely, Kraus does not go any further, despite objections to Gressman.

Within the OT the attribution of eternal priesthood to an earthly ruler would, to use France's words,³³ "be either non-sense, or verging on blasphemy".

In view of some striking parallels³⁴ with Dan 7 one can affirm that the Psalmist is likely to be thinking in terms of a heavenly locale.³⁵ Moreover, the Psalm is eschatological in so far as it looks to the son sitting at the right of the father and this leading to the subjection of the enemies, and beyond.³⁶ The sitting is a period of "ruling in the midst of your enemies" (v2). The Psalmist thinks sequentially to some extent. He regards the events to come as being eschatological in that they represent the overthrow of the present evil order. There is a careful differentiation throughout the Psalm between different functions of the Lord, namely to rule, judge and destroy, and of God, namely to invite to "sit", provide the mace of power and to subject the enemies. The overall responsibility and power lies with YHWH, but the Lord is the decisive instrument in the warfare against the enemies. We shall see later how in Ephesians this is brought to bear on the struggle of believers.

As far as the Psalm's history of interpretation is concerned, it is noteworthy that it left no trace in the known Qumran literature.³⁷ Rabbinic literature predating 260 AD does not feature messianic applications of Ps 110. This may have to do with its Christian use as a messianic proof text. After 260 AD it was applied messianically to Abraham, David and Hezekiah. It is difficult to say whether it was applied messianically during the time of Jesus because the sources are silent. But it could be argued, as France points out,³⁸ that Mark

³³ France, *Jesus*, 166.

³⁴ Ps 110 and Dan 7.9-27 are the only OT texts to combine the following elements: thrones (plural) are placed in the heavenly court, with God sitting on one of them; The son is invited and brought before God and receives authority, glory and reign; judgment is passed on the kingdoms of the nations; the enemies are being destroyed; the resulting kingdom lasts eternally. Rabbi Akiba thought that the second throne in Dan 7 is meant for the Davidic messiah (San 38b). In any case, Dan 7 may be the earliest interpretation of Ps 110. This would suggest that the Psalm was understood as referring to heaven long before Christianity arrived (*pace* Linton, "Trial", 260. Cf also Test Job 33.3 which is likely to have understood Ps 110.1 as describing a heavenly locale.

³⁵ Cf the combination of both texts in Matt 26.63 and Acts 7.55f.

³⁶ The term *לָרֶגֶל* marks here "a relative limit beyond which the activity of the main clause still continues" (Allen, *Psalms 100-150*, 80).

³⁷ This may have to do with what was perceived as its misuse by the Hasmonians who used it to defend their royal and priestly functions (1 Mac 14.41; Jub 32.1; 36.16 and Test Lev 8.3; 18).

³⁸ France, *Jesus*, 164.

12.35-37 and the Sanhedrin's reaction to Jesus' application of the Psalm, according to Mark 14.61-64, presuppose rather than argue a messianic understanding of Ps 110. Further support comes, perhaps, from 1 Enoch which repeatedly pictures the 'elect' as sitting on the throne of glory.³⁹ On balance, it would seem more likely that the Psalm was indeed understood messianically during the time of Jesus, despite the paucity of our extra-Biblical sources.⁴⁰

Turning to Ps 8, it is virtually impossible to reconstruct its precise setting.⁴¹ The setting differs from that of Ps 110 in that the language of Ps 8 is literally more 'down to earth'. Nevertheless, it too recognises God's glorious presence in heaven and on earth (vv1,4,10). This allows the author to illustrate God's all-pervading power which displays itself, on the one, hand in his heavenly presence and, on the other, through the utterances coming from the lips of babes. Whatever these utterances may be, they contrast with the silencing of the enemies. This is the framework for the central section (vv5-7) of which v7 forms part.

The main question regarding this central section concerns the identity of the son of man. Since most agree that v5 alludes to Gen 1.26, we have here an interesting blend between the inspiration of the moment—probably a nightly meditation⁴²—and considered reflection on the creation account. The Psalmist's main concern lies with the seeming insignificance of man within the glorious framework of God's universe. He confesses an apparent contradiction between what he sees in creation (vv4f) and what he knows to be true about man's God-given glory and splendour as ruler over creation (vv6f). Man is said to have been made "a little lower (מְעַט) than the heavenly beings". The Hebrew term used could mean "for a little while" or just "a little".⁴³ If the temporal sense had been intended, one might have expected the term to be used either in connection with 'day' (מִן הַיּוֹם - Job 10.20) or עוֹד.⁴⁴ A further objection to the translation "for a little while" is the parallel between vv6a and 7a.⁴⁵ The Psalmist is not thinking in temporal categories here.

³⁹ 1 Enoch 45.3; 51.3; 61.8; 62.3f; 69.29. But it is not entirely certain whether Ps 110 lies behind these passages.

⁴⁰ See also Loader, "Christ", 199 and Hay, *Glory*, 30.

⁴¹ Kraus, *Psalmen III*, 205, following others, argues for a post-exilic date. But for the possibility of a pre-exilic date see Gunkel, *Psalmen*, 29.

⁴² Kraus, *Psalmen I*, 205.

⁴³ Kidner, *Psalms 1-74*, 67

⁴⁴ Hamilton, "מְעַט", 519.

⁴⁵ Kidner's temporal interpretation may be influenced by Heb 2.7 where the author paraphrases "a little while".

The son of man is lower than the אֱלֹהִים. LXX understands this term as denoting angelic beings (cf Pss 82.1 and 86.8). But in those texts it is other gods, not the divine heavenly court, that are in view. If the choice for Ps 8.6 is therefore between 'God' and 'gods', the former is no doubt more likely. Why should the Psalmist have introduced angels at this point? It is the difference between God the creator and man who is set to rule over creation that is being expressed by the phrase "a little lower than God". V6 describes the functional aspects of man's *imago Dei* along the lines of Gen 1.26. In any case, there is no direct 'messianic' indication in the Psalm itself. The main observation for our present purposes is that the interpretation of the son of man in this Psalm cannot and should not be separated from Gen 1.

The significance of the small amount of kingship language in vv6f should not be overstated.⁴⁶ It supports the statements of rejoicing over the creation of the first man. The prototype of the king was Adam, God's vice-regent.⁴⁷ The reference back to the creation account (Gen 1.26-28) leads Delitzsch to ask whether the Psalmist should not have taken the Fall into account as well.⁴⁸ The likely answer is that the Psalmist was interested precisely in the pre-Fall status of man.⁴⁹ This can be supported from a largely overlooked text, 1QS 11.20-22, which reiterates the question of Ps 8.5 and goes on to relate it to man's physical descendancy according to Gen 2.17.

The links between Ps 8 and the creation account, according to the early chapters of Genesis, open up eschatological potential. The lack of reference to the 'new world' should not be taken with Kraus as evidence that the Psalmist thought the new world to be present already. The Psalmist directed his thoughts back towards the creation of man and towards man's pre-Fall status. In the light of the present evil (v3), how could the Psalmist have failed to long for the reinstatement of those circumstances? His meditation on man's God-given glory neither shows signs of a melancholic sense of failure or loss, nor displays a naive sense of happiness with the present circumstances. His meditative look back implies a sense of hope for the future reinstatement of man's glory. This optimism is based on God's "majesty in all the earth".

⁴⁶ Pace Bentzen, "Messias" (cf Kraus, *Psalmen* I, 70).

⁴⁷ Cf Ellison, *Centrality*, 14.

⁴⁸ Delitzsch, *Psalms* I, 200. Similarly Kraus, *Psalmen* I, 212.

⁴⁹ Kraus, *Psalmen* I, 212 criticises "traditional dogmatics [which] were wrong in speaking of an Urstand to which the hymn [ie the Psalm] looks back", but is unable to support these criticisms.

THE APPROPRIATION OT MATERIAL IN EPH 1.20-23

Eph 1 affords a clear example of awareness of the religio-cultural background⁵⁰ of the intended recipients, combined with language borrowed from the Scriptures. Exaltation and subjection language taken from the Psalms is combined with power language which shows God's superiority over pagan deities and principalities. The implication is that the God of the Hebrew Scriptures is well in control over the powers whose grip on the inhabitants of Asia Minor leads to widespread existential fear.⁵¹ Linguistically, the common denominator between the epistle's Jewish and gentile recipients would precisely have been the power language of v21.⁵² The likelihood is that "Judaism furnished new labels for the perceived powers".⁵³ For instance, the combination of φωτίζω + ὀφθαλμός (v18) is familiar from pagan initiation rites, but has also precedents in the LXX (Pss 12.4 and 18.9). Phrases such as "the name that is being named" as well as the list of powers (v21) confirm that the powers envisaged are not only spiritual in nature,⁵⁴ but also hostile.⁵⁵

The author took care in his use of power terminology. When applying the term δύνάμις—an expression which is normally reserved for the 'powers'—to God's power, he made sure to specify that this is the δύνάμις αὐτοῦ (v19). Alternatively, he employed

⁵⁰ See my "Summing-up", 88-111. The author's awareness of his addressees' background also reveals itself through his use of the 'once but now' scheme in chs 2.1-7, 11; 4.17-24.

⁵¹ Cf Arnold, *Powers* (chapter 1 and especially pp82-4) and Lona, *Eschatologie*, 430-48.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 155.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 129. See for instance 1 Enoch 61.10 and Slav Enoch 20.1.

⁵⁴ Pace Wink, *Powers*, 62.

⁵⁵ Pace Carr, *Powers*, 89, 98 and 111. Carr not only fails to take Ps 110 seriously, he also takes too lightly the parallel in 1 Cor 15.25-27 which testifies to a current understanding of the powers as being evil. See also Eph 4.8 which also discusses the ascension motif and deliberately includes in the quotation from Ps 68.19 the phrase "he led captives in his train". In the Psalm itself this refers to God's enemies—cf my discussion of Eph 4.8-10 in chapter four. When Carr argues that most NT quotations of Ps 110.1 are not interested in Christ's victory over the foes (p89), the proper inference to be drawn from this is not, as he suggests, that 1 Corinthians and Ephesians are not interested in this aspect either; rather, precisely because the relevant part of Ps 110.1 is frequently left out, it is noteworthy that 1 Corinthians and Ephesians deliberately name the enemy powers and relate them to their head, ie the devil (6.10-13). Note also that in ch 6.10 the same phrase ἐν τῷ κράτει τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ is used for God's strength (as opposed to that of the powers) as in ch 1.19. The continuity of thought is obvious.

different terms for God's strength⁵⁶ such as κράτος and ἰσχυρός. This combination may well originate from Isa 40.26 (cf Eph 6.10). In Isa 40 God's power is contrasted with that of the so-called 'powers' inhabiting the stars according to Babylonian astral religion. Ενέργεια (1.19f; 3.7; 4.16) occurs in conjunction with δύνάμις with reference to the cosmic powers as well as God's power in Wis 7.17,26; 2 Macc 3.29 and 3 Macc 4.21 and 5.12,28. The four power terms of v21 feature in a list in the Apocalypse of Enoch without, however, shedding new light on Ephesians. More important is the observation that the LXX frequently uses δύνάμις for angels and the hosts of heaven.⁵⁷ The multiplicity of power terms in v21 reflects a general Hebrew feature to expand a twofold reference to power in MT to a threefold expression.⁵⁸ This also underlies tendencies in the Targum on Isaiah and the LXX versions of Deuteronomy as well in Qumran writings. As a literary feature it underlines the author's deep roots in the thought world of Israel's Scriptures.

The messianic use of Ps 110.1 is compatible with the thrust of the Psalm itself. This, combined with some peculiarities of its use in Eph 1—such as interpreting the "enemies", the timeless yet eschatological superiority of God and his chosen one, and the 'heavenly' dimension of God's rule—coheres well with the interpretation of the Psalm offered above. In this regard Eph 1 and 1 Cor 15 go far beyond the usages of the κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν motif elsewhere in the NT. While the use of this motif may well have been inspired by early Christian practice, we must not lose sight of the originality displayed in the use of Ps 110 in the Pauline tradition. It is not just the motif of sitting at the right hand which lies at the heart of Eph 1.20ff, the theology of the Psalm itself is being appropriated in this context.

We must now consider whether there is a relationship between Ephesians and Ps 8. My earlier conclusion was that Ps 8 is neither directly eschatological nor inherently messianic. At the same time, we saw that the meditation on man's pre-Fall status as compared with suffering under the oppression of evil opens up clear eschatological potential. The Psalmist's confidence in God's majesty, despite man's seemingly insignificant status, is based on the hope which looks forward to the overthrow of evil enemies. In all likelihood, Ephesians relates Christ implicitly to the man of Ps 8 within a framework of

⁵⁶ In this Ephesians differs from 1 Cor 15.24. But as Rom 8.38 shows, Paul could be flexible in his use of such terminology.

⁵⁷ Arnold, *Powers*, 128.

⁵⁸ For the relevant OT data see Grundmann, "δύνάμις", 286-8 and 292-6.

Adam-Christ typology.⁵⁹ This is not unlike Rom 5.12-21 where Paul assumes a pre-Fall status of Adam which implied the absence of death. Ephesians too sees Christ as the victor over death (1.20) and as the agent of the restoration of pre-Fall conditions. The unconditional subjection of creation under man (Gen 1.28) before the Fall has come to its realisation in the new man, Christ. But Christ is Lord not only over earth's creation, he is Lord even over the spiritual powers 'in the heavenlies'. In this, Ephesians goes far beyond the concerns of the Psalmist who ponders the dichotomy between the seeming insignificance of man and his God-given responsibility. The reason for this expansion is its relevance for the intended recipients who are in need of encouragement in their struggle against the pagan powers of their day. To them these powers were not just Lords of their pagan past. They continued to threaten the existence of those who had turned to the Christian faith. The extra dimension of Christ's superiority compares with the limited authority given to Adam, ie over the earth and its inhabitants. Christ is more than a reiteration of Adam. He has been appointed head of the church and over the powers. From this the Christians in Western Asia Minor could draw considerable comfort. Ephesians recognised Ps 8 as a meeting point between protology and eschatology. The writer developed this potential for pastoral gain.

CONCLUSION

The common assumption that Eph 1.20-23 represents a wholesale taking over of the use of Pss 110 and 8 from early Christian exegetical stock is open to challenge. A case can be made for attributing considerably more exegetical activity to the author of Ephesians than has generally been assumed. This is borne out by a careful study of the combination of Pss 110 and 8 in Eph 1. A comparison with other NT texts which are often assumed to feature a similar combination helped to bring out the unique features of Ephesians.

It has also become clear that Ephesians shows an awareness of the OT *Vorlage* which goes beyond the level of *Wirkungsgeschichte* and which extends to the level of the OT text itself. Thus there is not only evidence of compatibility of NT text with OT *Vorlage* in regard to general thrust; the author of Ephesians appears to have been aware

⁵⁹ Notice throughout Eph 1 the ἐν Χριστῷ formula and its correlation with the Pauline scheme of Adam's old aeon versus Christ's new aeon.

even of the intertextual relationship between Ps 8 and the Biblical creation accounts. This relationship is exploited typologically in Ephesians.

CHAPTER THREE

THE USE OF ISAIAH IN EPH 2.13-17

"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the Law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near."

In Eph 2.13-17 the author draws on Isaiah in a number of ways. Although this is generally recognised, scholars have on the whole been surprisingly reluctant to relate these NT appropriations of OT material directly to the relevant OT texts themselves.¹ As Isaiah features more prominently than any other OT writing not only in ch 2 but throughout Ephesians, the writer's preference for this Book may well be more deliberate than is often recognised.

Vv13-17 have frequently been described as being based on pre-formed traditional, possibly hymnic-liturgical, material. This needs to be examined in order to ascertain whether or not the use of Isaiah should be attributed to the author of Ephesians himself. The role of the same OT texts in extra-biblical sources will then be considered as well as the specific literary links between Isaiah and Eph 2.13-17 and their theological relevance for interpreting the latter.

Why does the author employ the Hebrew Scriptures so extensively if, as is commonly held, he addresses a solely gentile church? This would not be a major problem, but the use of OT material is of such subtlety as to require on the part of the audience at least some

¹ Strangely Fischer, *Tendenz*, 134 entitles a section on Eph 2.13ff "Das Zitat Jes 57.19" without then commenting on the "Zitat" at all. Instead he prefers to focus on later gnostic interpretations of Ephesians as a source for reconstructing a hypothetical influence on Ephesians. Fischer dispenses with the actual wording of the quotation in order to create room for his hypothesis. A different approach often adopted is to relate the NT appropriation of OT material purely to the role a given OT text played in the socio-religious context of first-century Christianity. I have dealt with this somewhat reductionist approach in the preceding chapter.

knowledge of its specific background in order to appreciate the nuances involved. I shall suggest that there was a not insignificant Jewish-minded contingent—perhaps ethnic Jews or gentile God-fearers—among the addressees. Whatever their composition, the OT influence will need to be related to the letter's recipients.² Unfortunately the irregular use of 'we' and 'you' throughout the epistle does not aid us greatly in reconstructing the addressees.³

² It may be argued that the use of OT material must not be used as an indicator for the composition of the intended audience. The classic example that could be pointed out in support of this argument is the Gospel of Luke which is thought by most to have been intended for a solely gentile community, yet which features OT material in significant quantities. In response, the following points need to be made: (1) A large portion of Luke's OT material occurs in passages very much dependent on Mark and 'Q'. Peculiarly Lukan material, on the other hand, has significantly less OT links. (2) The often repeated assumption which, according to Esler, goes back to Overbeck, *Erklärung* (1870), that Luke's audience is solely gentile, has been questioned by Moscato, "Theories", 355-61 and Kilpatrick, "Luke", and has been substantially criticised by Esler himself (*Community*, 30ff). Esler draws particular attention to the theme of table-fellowship in Luke-Acts and concludes that the community addressed consisted of an even mixture of Jews and gentiles.

³ The oscillation between different usages of *we* and *you* terminology throughout the letter is such that it becomes impossible to apply a single rule to the entire epistle. Sometimes the "we" are distinct from the "you" (2.3,5), but sometimes the "you" belong to the same group as the "we" (6.12). The principal options are threefold, but it will be necessary to consider a combination of options: (1) "We" refers to Jewish Christians, "you" to gentile addressees. (2) "We" are the senders, "you" are the letter's recipients. (3) "We" are all Christians, "you" are the letter's recipients. Advocates of the first option include Abbott, *Ephesians*, 21f; Foulkes, *Ephesians*, 54ff and Scott, *Ephesians*, 147f. Ch 1.12 could refer to Jews "who have hoped before". Alternatively, it could denote Paul and other Christians of the first generation. But the first option is perhaps more likely. It is in any case unlikely that "we" refers to the senders. Apart from Tychicus no-one is mentioned at the close of the letter, and even there the author speaks mainly of himself (vv19-22). The second option is favoured by Jayne, "We", 151f. However, Jayne restricts his study to ch 1.3-14, whereas the major difficulty arises in ch 2. A case where "you" clearly refers to the recipients *in toto* is ch 6.21f. Wilson, "We", 676-80 (third option) thinks he can go further and defines 'addressees' as the newly baptised. Instances where all believers are in view are ch 2.6f,10; 4.7,13,15; 5.20 and 6.12. A very good case can be made for any of these options at least at some point in the letter, with the possible exception of the view that "we" refers to the senders. The recipients include beyond doubt a large proportion of gentiles (2.11; 3.1). To infer from these verses that the entire community addressed consisted of gentiles is, however, too simplistic. The very fact that the author needed to point out when he addresses gentiles in particular (2.11; 3.1), shows that there are likely to have been some Jewish members in the congregation as well. Ch 4.17 no longer equates the "you" with the nations. The addressees are not told not to conduct their lives as they used to—which we would expect if they were all gentiles—but "as the nations do". No longer are only the gentiles among the addressees in view, as was the case in ch 2. The presence of

Hence we shall have to rely to some degree on what has come to be known as mirror reading, that is the reconstruction of a dialogue on the basis of the contribution of just one of the partners, in this case the author of Ephesians.

The outline of this chapter is as follows:

Eph 2.13-18 - A Hymnic Remnant?

Eph 2.11ff - Its General Jewish Background

Eph 2.13f.17 - Specific Literary Links with the Hebrew Scriptures
Scriptural Material and its Extra-Biblical Appropriations

Isa 57.19

Isa 52.7

The Appropriation of OT Material in Eph 2

The So-called Double Structure

The Train of Thought of Eph 2.13ff

"...annulling the Law of commandments in regulations."

"...to create in himself a new man..."

"He came to announce peace..."

The Significance, Function & Understanding of Isa 57.19 in Eph 2

Conclusion

Conclusions

A HYMNIC REMNANT?

The crucial question is whether the responsibility for the concentration in Eph 2 of material ultimately going back to Isaiah lies with the author of Ephesians or whether it has been taken over largely from tradition.

Are vv14-18 "cast in poetic and rhythmic form"? This is Martin's verdict, based on Schille's pioneering study on early Christian hymns in 1965.⁴ If this verdict is valid, the use of OT material throughout these verses might have to be attributed not to the author of Ephesians but to an earlier source. Martin concedes that scholars vary as to "the exact details of arrangement of these verses".⁵ In

Jewish converts in most cities of Western Asia Minor is not in doubt (Schürer, *History* III.3, 17-36). This is corroborated by the reported extensive evangelistic activity by Paul in the area (Acts 19). Consequently, Ephesians may well have been addressed to a mixed Jewish-gentile community. While chs 2.11 and 3.1 indicates that the audience consisted predominantly of gentile converts to Christianity, it does not necessarily warrant the common assumption that it was exclusively gentile.

⁴ Martin, "Reconciliation", 168.

⁵ Ibid.

reality there are also numerous scholars who refuse to assume a hymnic background for this verses altogether.⁶

The following chart sets out the various 'hymnic options' proposed by scholars. The table is of course not a comprehensive guide to scholarly opinion, but it can certainly be regarded as reasonably representative of those in favour of a hymnic reconstruction. An 'x' denotes inclusion into the reconstructed 'hymn'; a phrase in square brackets indicates inclusion of the relevant clause, but not of the bracketed word or phrase.

	Sanders	Lindemann	Burger	Fischer	Gnilka	Schille	Martin	Wengst	Lincoln
14a	[γάρ]	[γάρ]		[γάρ]	[γάρ]	X	[γάρ]	[γάρ]	[γάρ]
b	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
c	x	x	x	x	[τ. φραγ.]	x		[τ. φραγ.]	[τ. φραγ.]
d	[x]	x		x	x		x		x
e					[αὐτοῦ]				
15a					x				
b		x		x	x	x			x
c	x	x	[ἐν αὐτῷ]		[τοὺς δύο-εἰς ἓνα]	x	[τοὺς δύο]	x	x
d	[x]	x			x	x		x	x
16a	x		[τῷ θεῷ]			x	x	[ἐν-σώματι]	x
b	[x]					x		x	
c		x			x		x	x	x
17a			x	x	x	x			
b			[ὁμῖν]	[ὁμῖν]	[ὁμῖν-εἰρήνην]	[ὁμῖν]			
18a						x			
b									
c						x			

It is immediately clear that v18 can be excluded from our considerations as Schille's inclusion of this verse in the hymnic reconstruction has been rejected unanimously. It is noteworthy that v13 is not included in any reconstruction and v17 is accepted by only four scholars. These verses both incorporate material from Isaiah. It follows that if an underlying hymn should be assumed at all, then the

⁶ Stuhlmacher, "Friede"; Deichgräber, *Gotteshymnus*, 167; Wolter, "Rechtfertigung", 62ff; Mussner, *Christus*, 100f; Ernst, *Briefe*, 314ff; Merkley, "Tradition", 79ff and Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 106f. Undecided are Pfammatter, *Epheser*, 22f and Barth, *Ephesians*, 261. The question is ignored by Caird, *Ephesians*; Foulkes, *Ephesians*; Bruce, *Ephesians*; Wood, *Ephesians* and Mitton, *Ephesians*.

role of the OT material would simply have been to frame the hymnic remnants (vv14-6).

These three verses consist of twelve phrases. How much of this would have to be included in a hymnic reconstruction? The answers given by the scholars consulted above are far from unanimous. If for the sake of argument we define reasonable agreement among scholars as requiring a minimum majority of at least 2:1, reasonable agreement as to the inclusion or exclusion of phrases as part of any reconstructed hymn has been reached only for vv14-15a and 16b, that is for just over fifty-five percent of the relevant material. The scholars consulted agree, with minor variations, that v14a-d belongs to an underlying hymn, whereas the phrases ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ τὸν νόμον τῶν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν (14e,15a) and διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ (16b) should be considered glosses.

It is abundantly clear that Martin's evaluation of scholarly opinion as being virtually undivided must be rejected. Indeed, as stated above, the above survey takes no account of the numerous scholars who see no need for assuming a hymnic background to these verses. Attempts to reconstruct an underlying source for Eph 2.13-17 lack conviction. This is also evident from scrutinising the major underlying arguments employed in attempting to arrive at a valid reconstruction. This is best done by reviewing Gnllka's arguments,⁷ as his commentary is fairly recent and as his treatment of this aspect is not only thorough but also rather typical of the approaches taken by others.⁸

Gnllka's argument⁹ runs as follows. (1) The term αὐτός is taken to be a certain sign for the "beginning of an older song". (2) The passage includes certain *hapax legomena*, both within the body of Pauline literature¹⁰ and within the NT. (3) There are two overlapping but different concepts of reality—one of 'vertical' peace, the other of 'horizontal' peace. (4) The twofold world view of v14 is seen to be incompatible with the rest of the letter, which, according to Gnllka, presupposes many layers making up the heavenly realm. (5) There is in the remaining letter a lack of parallels to the reflexive connotations of the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ in vv15f.

⁷ This review will primarily be based on Stuhlmacher's detailed reaction to Gnllka's approach to this text.

⁸ Cf most recently Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 127f.

⁹ Gnllka, *Epheser*, 147f.

¹⁰ This is a surprising argument considering that Gnllka regards Ephesians as pseudo-Pauline. Stuhlmacher, "Friede", 340-6.

Stuhlmacher attacks both Gnilka's starting point as well as his actual reconstruction.¹¹ Foremost among Stuhlmacher's points of criticism is his justified attack on Gnilka's presupposition that theological arguments are more important than literary criteria and formal features. Furthermore, phrases which according to Gnilka are glosses include various *hapax legomena*.¹² Conversely, a number of *hapax legomena* are found in the co-text of Eph 2.13-17. One can go further and note that a large number of terms which appear in the reconstruction have parallels elsewhere in the epistle.¹³ The same applies to αὐτός (1.14; 4.11; 5.23) as indeed to the overlaid participial constructions and the emphasis on εἶς (cf 4.3-6). For the idea that Christ himself acts soteriologically, Stuhlmacher points to Gal 1.4; 3.13; 4.4f; Rom 3.25f and 5.6,8f.¹⁴ Within Ephesians, ch 5.2,25 furnish the closest parallels. Also, neither the neuter form ἀμφοτέρα nor the Jewish background of the term μεσότοιχον suggest that our text incorporates cosmological categories.¹⁵ A significant deficiency of all the major reconstructions surveyed above consists of their failure to account for the inclusion of the material from Isaiah. The present study hopes to fill that gap. Hence we may conclude that the basic assumption to be adopted must be that Eph 2.13-17 originated not only from the same pen, but also from the same mind as the remainder of the epistle.

Before investigating the theological content of our passage, we need to visualise briefly the structurally prominent place of the OT material incorporated or alluded to. The following outline will quickly reveal what has often been ignored; the author's allusions to Isaiah enclose the very heart of this vital section:

v12 gentiles in relation to Jews - separated and no access to God

vv13,14a allusion(s) to Isaiah

vv14b-16 the removal of the barrier

v17 allusions to Isaiah

vv18f gentiles in relation to Jews - unified and access to God

¹¹ Stuhlmacher, "Friede", 340-6.

¹² Ibid, 343.

¹³ Again cf Stuhlmacher for details.

¹⁴ Ibid, 344.

¹⁵ Regarding the former, the use of neuter for groups of persons is perfectly legitimate if, as in the present case, the emphasis falls on general characteristics (see BDF, *Grammatik*, 76). As for μεσότοιχον, cf my discussion of the parallel in the Ep Arist, 139 and 142 below.

What appears to be deliberately chiasitic is in fact the result of the deliberate use of the inclusio consisting of the allusions to Isaiah.¹⁶ The function of the inclusio is to throw light on the core statement of the passage, that is vv14b-16, the removal of the barrier. Thus any valid interpretation of vv14b-16 must be compatible with the appropriation of OT material in vv13,14a,17. This appropriation can only be examined if we pay attention first to the OT texts themselves, thus attempting to place ourselves in the position of an author well acquainted not only with other contemporary appropriations of the Hebrew Scriptures, but with Israel's Bible itself.

The chart above will be refined further when examining the literary relationship between Isaiah and Eph 2. Before moving on to such specific matters, the more general Jewish background of Eph 2.11ff must be highlighted.

THE JEWISH BACKGROUND OF EPH 2.11FF

Käsemann's and Schlier's attempted reconstructions of a gnostic background have been so severely criticised that they need not detain us here.¹⁷ The terminological peculiarities of this passage appear to lead in a different *religionsgeschichtlich* direction. The fact that gentiles are described in v11 as precisely that shows clearly that the discussion is presented from a Jewish perspective.¹⁸ Also, the *fence/wall* metaphor in v14 has a close parallel in the *Epistle of Aristeas* 139 and 142:

In his wisdom the legislator, in a comprehensive survey of each particular part or being endowed by God for the knowledge of universal truths, surrounded us with unbroken palisades and iron walls to prevent our mixing with any of the other peoples in any matter, being thus kept pure in body and soul, preserved from false beliefs, and worshipping the only God omnipotent over all creation...So, to prevent our being perverted by contact with others or by mixing with bad influences, he hedged us in on all sides with strict observances connected with meat and drink and touch and hearing and sight, after the manner of the Law.¹⁹

¹⁶ Compare the inclusio formed by the OT material in 1.20c and 2.2a.

¹⁷ See Mussner, *Christus*, 88-91; Percy, *Probleme*, 278-88 and Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 113.

¹⁸ As Caird, *Letters*, 55 puts it, "no Greek or Roman thought of himself as a Gentile."

¹⁹ Translation by Shutt, "Aristeas", 22.

Dating this letter is extremely difficult, with suggestions oscillating between 250 BC and 100 AD. The majority of scholars opts for 150-100 BC.²⁰ The Jewish author is very concerned with defending Judaism against challenges resulting from the influx of Hellenistic ideas. In that respect this text is typical, as shown by Ez 6.21; Neh 9.2; 10.29 and Lev 20.24. Significantly the Epistle of Aristeas calls the Law "wall" and "fence/palisades" at the same time.²¹ What is divided are two groups of people. A further important text is 3 Macc 3.4ff, from the first century BC or AD, which testifies that the Jews, by observing the ordinances of the Law, subjected themselves to 'hatred' by the gentiles.²² The background of Ephesians may have to be sought along similar lines.²³

We can penetrate further by considering Isa 59.2. There are three other references to Isa 57-60 in Eph: Isa 57.19 (cf Eph 2.17) and 59.17 (cf Eph 6.14-17) as well as possibly 60.1f (cf Eph 5.14b²⁴). Hence we may assume that Isa 59.2 was known to the author: "Your [ie the people's] iniquities have separated you from God." The word for separated, a form of בָּרַל, is used elsewhere in the OT, and indeed in Isa 56.3, for the separation from the people of God. This separation was directly linked to the observance of the regulations of the Law. The implication for Isa 59.2 is that Israel rebelled against the very device which guaranteed the people's special relationship with their God.²⁵ This evil state of affairs is defined as a lack of righteousness and truth (v4). The combination of these concepts is not only characteristic of Isaiah (11.4f [cf Eph 6.14]; 33.15; 45.19; 48.1 and 59.4,14), but also of Ephesians (4.24f²⁶; 5.9; 6.14). Ephesians shows clear knowledge of Isa 57-59, including ch 59.2-4. There is no need to look far beyond Israel's Scriptures in order to account for the fence/wall metaphor as applied to the law of commandments in Eph 2.14f.²⁷

²⁰ In the light of Philo's ontological view of the Torah, there is no need to date the wall/fence metaphor as applied to the Torah in post-Ephesian times. For this see Weiss, *Untersuchungen*, 277ff.

²¹ Stuhlmacher, "Friede", 344. Other texts where the Law, commandments and judgments are loosely related are the Damascus Document and Esd 8.7 (Roetzel, "Relations", 85).

²² See furthermore SB II, 127 and 586.

²³ Mussner, *Christus*, 83.

²⁴ Cf my chapter five below.

²⁵ Isa 57.19 is interpreted similarly in Ber 34b.

²⁶ This text may have been inspired by Isa 59.3.

²⁷ While any interpretation of the wall as a cosmic wall of separation between heaven and earth becomes unnecessary, it may be worth pointing out that even such a concept could be paralleled in Jewish sources (1 Enoch 14.9; Test Lev 2.7; 3 Apoc

Eph 2.13-17 shows clear evidence of a Jewish background which goes beyond the mere use of Isaianic material. In particular we noted the striking parallel with the Epistle of Aristee. With this in mind we proceed to elaborate the literary links between this part of Ephesians and the Book of Isaiah.

SPECIFIC LITERARY LINKS WITH THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

There are two direct links between Eph 2.13-17 and Isaiah.²⁸ The first of these parallels as follows:

Eph 2.13	οἱ ποτε ὄντες μακρὰν ἐγενήθητε ἐγγὺς
v17b	εἰρήνην ὑμῖν τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ εἰρήνην τοῖς ἐγγύς
Isa 57.19	εἰρήνην ἐπ' εἰρήνην τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ ἐγγὺς οὖσιν

The degree of correspondence in this case is such that the link between Isaiah and Eph 2.17b comes close to being a quotation, with v13 perhaps being an allusion, possibly in anticipation of v17b. Secondly, there is Eph 2.17a which recalls, by way of a brief allusion, the thrust of Isa 52.7:

Eph 2.17a	ἐλθὼν εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνην
Isa 52.7	ὡς πόδες εὐαγγελιζομένου ἀκοὴν εἰρήνης, ὥς εὐαγγελιζόμενος ἀγανά, ὅτι...

The quick succession of these references to Isaiah would undoubtedly have been obvious to most Jewish readers.²⁹ We must

Bar 2.1f) - there is no need to look for a gnostic background to the present text. In any case, the term φραγμός can be explained on the basis of texts such as Ep Arist 139 and 142 as well as Isa 5.2 LXX (the fence built around God's vineyard, a fence which the rabbis happily identified as the Torah - cf SB III, 588).

²⁸ Stuhlmacher, *Friede*, 337-58 has argued for a further connection between Eph 2.14a (Αὐτός γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν) and Isa 9.5f. The potential parallel is not so much verbal, but perhaps by way of summary, the key concept being the linkage of Davidic sonship and peace. If Stuhlmacher is right, we have in Eph 2 a combination of Isa 9.5f and 57.19. Such a combination has possible parallels in 1 Enoch 71.15 and in the rabbinic work *Derekh Erec Zuta* ha-shalom 21b where Rabbi Jose Ha-gelili—beginning of the second century AD if the ascription is correct—is said to have taught: 'Great is the peace; when the King, the Messiah, will reveal himself to Israel, he will come with peace, as it says: 'How lovely are the feet...' (Isa 52.7 - cf SB III, 587). However, quite possibly the wording of Eph 2.14a owes more to the attempt to counterbalance the reference to Christ's capacity as the bringer of peace in v17a (ABCB'A') than to Isa 9.5f.

now consider the actual OT text(s), but also their appropriation in sources other than Ephesians. This will equip us to elucidate the specific contribution made by the writer of Ephesians to the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of these texts.

SCRIPTURAL MATERIAL AND ITS EXTRA-BIBLICAL APPROPRIATIONS

The clearest of the links between Eph 2 and Isaiah consists in the overlap between Eph 2.13,17 and Isa 57.19.

Isaiah 57.19

Isa 57.19 concludes a large section announcing salvation (chs 49-57). It is framed on either side (48.22; 57.21) by the stern warning that there can be no peace for the wicked. According to Delitzsch, the 'wicked' are God's adversaries among his people.³⁰ But this runs counter to the use of the term elsewhere in Isaiah.³¹ Also, the 'nations' play an important part in the narrative. The 'wicked' are therefore more likely to be God's adversaries *per se*, not just those among Israel. Consequently ch 56.6-8 extends the offer of redemption at least in principle to gentiles as well. The distinction is no longer rigidly between Israel and the rest. At issue is the individual, regardless of ethnic origin.³² This does not, of course, preclude the fact that God reveals himself primarily among his people.

The adding of proselytes to the people of God (56.7f) is theologically extraordinary.³³ It is introduced by the solemn introductory מְשֻׁלָּם (cf Zech 12.1) and the divine double name.³⁴ This cross-ethnic thrust must not be played down in favour of a purely geographical notion restricted to Jews at home and in the diaspora. Those who are 'added', have been included because of their worship of the God of Israel, not because they belonged to a particular ethnic group. The ultimately vast scope of this 'addition' or 'inclusion' is

²⁹ This is not altered by the fact that the rendering of Isa 52.7 in Eph 2.17 is somewhat closer to MT than to the LXX. Nevertheless, neither LXX nor MT have an equivalent for "preaching good news"

³⁰ Delitzsch, *Jesaja*, 589.

³¹ 3.11; 5.23; 13.11; 14.5; 53.9.

³² Barth, *Ephesians*, 278 appears to accept this, but insists elsewhere (p270) that Isa 57.19 refers to Jews at home and Jews in the diaspora only..

³³ Cf Jer 10.25 for the categorical view that the nations do not acknowledge the God of Israel (cf 1 Thes 4.5; also Gal 4.8 and Eph 2.12 and 4.17-9).

³⁴ Incidentally the thought is closely parallel to the ingathering of other sheep in John 10.16.

hinted at by the striking preposition לְכָל־עַמִּים ³⁵ which must be interpreted on the basis of the reference to 'all peoples' in v7. The gathering of the dispersed Israelites is not enough (49.6).

The events envisaged in chs 49 and 56 clearly belong to the future. The same applies to ch 57.19, as the previous verses indicate.³⁶ However, the vagueness of the future references created room for later applications of these prophecies. Also, the so-called 'vertical' dimension is found in the immediate context of v19. The peace offered to the righteous provides a link with God. Conversely, the lack of peace for those who disregard God may in some cases be caused by sins in the 'horizontal' realm—ie human relationships.³⁷ Nevertheless, Isaiah makes it plain that the root of the problem is the disrupted man-God relationship (57.8,11-13,16), not the fact of the dispersion. Inevitably we must now interpret those far away and those near not exclusively as Jews at home and in the dispersion,³⁸ but as those who are prepared to worship the God of Israel both outside (*far*) and within (*near*) the covenant people. This corresponds to the concept, implied in ch 57.20f, that the wicked are found both in and apart from the covenant community.³⁹

An objection to the view that those *far* and *near* include Israelites and non-Israelites might be that Isa 43.6 applies the concept of gathering "your sons and daughters" from the north and the south to

³⁵ For this cf Young, *Isaiah* II, 394.

³⁶ Notice the change in tense whenever the Prophet or God himself comes to address the future of the righteous ones (cf 57.2,12,13,14,16,18).

³⁷ Examples include human greed (56.11; 57.17).

³⁸ Pace Westermann, *Isaiah* 40-66, 330; Watts, *Isaiah* II, 263 and Whybray, *Isaiah* II, 211.

³⁹ While some rabbinic texts leave this matter unresolved (DeutR 5.15; Ber 14b), others (San 99a; NumR 11.7; M^ekh Exod 20.25 and Ber 34b) explicitly interpret the *far* and the *near* as reflecting the individual's relation to sin and transgression. This is not applied ethnically. San 28.6 understands the *far* as being gentile proselytes. This may be due to the occasional tendency to regard gentiles as law-breakers and despisers of the Law, and therefore as 'sinners' (for instance Ps Sol 17.22,25). In Qumran "being drawn near" refers repeatedly to the purification of community members (1 QH 14.13f; 1 QS 6.16-26; 8.18; 9.15f and 11.13). Test Naph 4.5 alludes to Isa 57.19, but fails to specify the identity of those afar (Merklein, "Tradition", 97). The picture of those 'afar' is also taken up in Peter's first speech according to Acts 2.39. In ch 10.34f Peter is again reported to have employed this picture. In view of Peter's application of the Joel prophecy to gentiles (Acts 2.5-11,17), it is likely that the Isa motif refers implicitly to gentiles already in his first reported speech. Nevertheless, it is made explicit only in ch 10.34f that the ethnic barriers are *de facto* irrelevant. But in continuity with the rabbinic sources mentioned above, Acts 2.39 shows already an appreciation of the cross-ethnic ('horizontal') as well as theological ('vertical') thrust of the Prophet's message.

Israelites only. However, similar statements in chs 49.12 and 60.3f,9 show that the same terminology could be applied by the Prophet to gentiles. Ch 49.6f suggests that this is so because God had appointed Israel as the light for the nations: God's offer of salvation has to reach to "nations" and to the "ends of the earth". It is "not enough" for Israel alone to be raised and gathered. "Those who dwell in darkness" [ie the nations] are invited to "come in" (v9). A similar discussion is found in ch 60. Here too it is clear that the sons and daughters who are being gathered from afar (v4) and the children being brought home from far away places (v9) include not only Israelites (v4) but also those from the nations (v5) who used to dwell in darkness but who were attracted by the light of God in Israel (vv2f). Admittedly Isaiah's prophecy is mostly directed at Israel, but references to the nations who respond positively are frequent enough not to be overlooked.⁴⁰ Hence it is not surprising that NT authors should have used these chapters when discussing the standing of gentiles in relation to the gospel.

The theological proportions of what is said in ch 56.7 have been underscored by the unusual terminology employed. The same is true of ch 57.19. In the OT the term בָּרָא almost exclusively denotes God's physical creation. Accordingly, the announcement of peace is here seen along the lines of divine creation.⁴¹ If the concept that language creates being is thought to be a modern notion, this text proves otherwise. Divine language guarantees the bringing about of that which is announced. Quite possibly Isaiah alludes here to the Biblical creation narratives. This may well prove significant when we come to the interpretation of Eph 2.

The claim that the Prophet thought strictly in terms of 'Jews at home' and 'Jews in the dispersion' is not supported by the evidence.⁴² To argue for a straightforward ethnic application is to read the negative estimate of gentile behaviour found in texts such as Ps Sol 17 back into Isaiah and so produce a simplistic distortion. The significance of this observation for interpreting the appropriation of Isaiah in Eph 2 will be the subject of a separate section on the Appropriation of OT Material in Eph 2.

⁴⁰ Cf especially chs 49.6f; 52.10; 55.4f and 56.1-8.

⁴¹ Watts, *Isaiah* II, 263.

⁴² The use of Isa 57.19 in rabbinic documents is ambiguous. Some texts apply Isa 57.19 to inner Jewish divisions (bBer 34b; M^akh Exod 20.25 and NumR 11.7), others to gentile proselytes (NumR 8.4; Midr Sam 28.6).

Isaiah 52.7

The second text to consider is Isa 52.7 which is echoed not only in Eph 2.17, but also in ch 6.15. Its context suggests that Israel suffered under the oppression of Babylon. In v7 the messenger expresses the hope of being able to produce evidence of YHWH's return to Zion. Salvation has here a definite future aspect (v3). Although v9 speaks of Jerusalem's redemption as a matter of the past, the Prophet himself is not pictured as having spoken already. The emphasis lies on the messenger's function, not on his person.⁴³ At this stage within Isaiah salvation still appears to be confined to Zion (v8). The nations seem to be bystanders, watching as God stands up for his people (v10). Later, in chs 55 and 56, the scope is widened to include proselytes. Consequently, for Eph 2 to have employed Isa 52.7 alone would not have served his purpose of addressing the gentile Christians among his readership. Hence the author combined this verse with a quotation from Isa 57.19 which is more directly relevant and suitable for the trans-ethnic thrust of Eph 2.

Within the NT, one text which clearly overlaps with Isa 52.7 is Acts 10.34-6. Peter arrives at the house of Cornelius and affirms 'I now realise how true it is that God does not show favouritism, but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. This is the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord over all.'⁴⁴ Again the latter is understood eschatologically-messianically.⁴⁵ Peter is further portrayed as realising the theological potential behind the Isaianic peace offer, which is not just strictly for Israel but, at least in principle, for gentiles as well. This expansion in scope, coupled with the restrictive "who fear him and do what is right" in Acts 10.35, reflects a tendency very similar to that of the combination of Isa 52.7 with 57.19 which we find in Eph 2.17.

⁴³ Whybray, *Isaiah* II, 167.

⁴⁴ The italicised portions show the verbal or implied overlap with Isa 52.7. We have here an interesting parallel between Peter's address according to Acts and Paul's argument in Rom 10. The overlap includes in particular the reference to Christ's Lordship over all (cf v36 and Rom 10.12) as well as the material from Isa 52.7 (cf v36 and Rom 10.15).

⁴⁵ Other examples of an eschatological understanding of Isa 52.7 are found in ThrenR 1.22.57 and 5.18.1 as well as in the Qumran text 11 QMelch 18 (cf Stuhlmacher, *Evangelium* I, 149). A messianic interpretation is furthermore presupposed in LevR 9.9 and Midr Tan Tol 14. Clearly some of the Midrashim are rather late. But a significant portion of Leviticus Rabbah can be traced to earliest rabbinic times (Maccoby, *Writings*, 37).

Rom 10.15 is also parallel to Acts 10 in that v12 affirms that Christ is 'Lord over all', that is Jews and gentiles. Salvation is for those who call upon the name of the Lord (cf Joel 3.5). This leads into the explicit quotation from Isa 52.7. The quotation itself is about the fact that Israel had been told, but had not believed (cf vv16-8). But, significantly, it forms part of an argument which centres on the acceptance of the gospel by gentiles (vv12f.18-20) which plays a role in God's purposes for Israel. Although Rom 10 does not interpret Isa 52.7 as a reference to the inclusion of gentiles, Paul uses it together with further OT quotations, particularly from Isaiah, to show how the gentile's response to the gospel relates to its rejection by Israel. Interestingly, in the following chapter (11.26f) Paul also quotes from Isa 59.20f. This compares with the combination of Isa 52.7 and 59.17 in Eph 6.15-17. For the moment it suffices to note that the rabbinic and NT understanding of Isa 52.7 is essentially compatible with my interpretation of this text above. This sets the scene for a more detailed appraisal of the role of the Isaianic material in Eph 2.

THE APPROPRIATION OF OT MATERIAL IN EPH 2

The material from Isaiah is not introduced formally nor quoted explicitly. Yet many scholars speak casually of the NT author's interpretation of the OT text. Is this justified here? Lincoln moves in a slightly different direction, speaking of the author's more incidental use of the OT compared with Paul's use of Scripture in Rom 9 - 11.⁴⁶ My own view is that the use of Isaiah was quite deliberate but not necessarily exegetical—that is an exposition of the OT *Vorlage*.⁴⁷ It will have to be examined whether, and to what extent, the author may have alluded to the *Vorlage* precisely because its original thrust may have been well-known to his audience. Does the interpretation of Ephesians depend in any way on the addressees' appreciation of the relevant OT context? Would this appreciation have enhanced their understanding of the OT material employed? Throughout this study this consideration will re-emerge.

It is frequently suggested, if not presupposed, that Eph 2.13-17 goes far beyond the thrust of Isaiah. Evidence for this is seen in the application of the *near/far* motif to Jews and gentiles and also in what is sometimes called the double structure, the vertical

⁴⁶ Lincoln, "Use", 26f and 29f.

⁴⁷ Pace Caird, *Ephesians*, 56 who deduces from these verses that the author "was well versed in rabbinic methods of interpretation".

relationship being that with God and the horizontal relationship being interethnic. My contention is that such arguments are unnecessary when the co-text of Isaiah as elaborated above is taken into account and when such insights are combined with an appreciation of the train of thought of Eph 2 which is not dependent on speculation about the possibility of a 'hymnic' origin for some of these verses.

The So-called Double Structure

Ephesians divides up Isaiah's pleonastic phrase 'peace over peace' and assigns one 'peace' to those afar and the other to those near. Thus the vertical dimension of the standing of both ethnic groups before God is emphasised.⁴⁸ From this the horizontal dimension follows logically. It is because both groups are reconciled with God in Christ via the same route of access (v18) that they are reconciled with each other.⁴⁹ To what extent does this go beyond the message of Isaiah?

We saw that when the Prophet employs the near/far motif, the distinction envisaged is primarily between those who worship the God of Israel and those who decline to do so. Despite texts such as Ps Sol 17.24, this distinction cannot simply be equated with that between Jews and gentiles in Isaiah. Neither does it correlate exclusively to the distinction between Jews at home and Jews in the dispersion. In principle God's offer of salvation is universal. Gentiles are not rejected (Isa 56) if they respond to God's offer and covenant. For the Prophet the main factor is not ethnic origin but one's vertical standing before God.⁵⁰ The horizontal dimension of Ephesians, to be sure, goes beyond Isaiah. This is not so much a violation of the thrust of Isaiah, but a drawing out of a particular implication for which Isa 57.19 leaves room. To use Förster's words, we "hardly do justice to the passage if we do not perceive that the Law plays a double role, dividing the Gentiles from the commonwealth of Israel and also Israel from God."⁵¹

When Martin asks whether the reconciliation applies mainly to sinners or to the racial groups concerned,⁵² the answer must surely be: primarily the former, but as a logical consequence also the

⁴⁸ Mussner, *Christus*, 101.

⁴⁹ This essentially answers Percy's question (*Probleme*, 282) why Christ's death is applied horizontally.

⁵⁰ Below I will offer further justification for this view.

⁵¹ Förster, "εἰρήνη", in *TWNT* II, 415.

⁵² *Ibid*, 178.

latter.⁵³ All humankind goes back to the same creator. Incidentally, such a vertical application of Christ's reconciliatory work is typically Pauline (Rom 5.1f; Col 1.20-22). However, the explicit elaboration of the horizontal consequence, racial reconciliation, as based on the appropriation of Isa 57.19 forms the specific contribution of Ephesians.⁵⁴ This must now be tested by examining the extent to which the author's appropriation of material from Isaiah fits the train of thought of vv13ff.

The Train of Thought of Eph 2.13ff

In an earlier section I suggested the following general outline of Eph 2.13-9:

- v12 gentiles in relation to Jews - separated and no access to God
- vv13,14a allusion(s) to Isaiah⁵⁵
- vv14b-16 the removal of the barrier
- v17 allusions to Isaiah
- v18f gentiles in relation to Jews - unified and access to God

We must now refine this outline somewhat by taking the following observations on board. (1) The inner bracket identified above (vv13,14a and 17) is characterised by the *near and far* motif (vv13 and 17b) and the double reference to "peace" (vv14a and 17a). (2) Such a reference to peace also preoccupies v15, thus marking it as the centre piece of these verses. (3) The remaining two aspects of v15—enmity has disappeared; unity has been brought about—are

⁵³ Pace Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 114 who claims that, in the author's view, the aim must be access to God via the establishment of peace between Jews and non-Jews. Access to God is precisely not „das letzte Ziel“—that is, the ultimate objective—but a present reality which forms the basis of ethnic peace. Elsewhere Schnackenburg somewhat corrects his own statement by saying that horizontal reconciliation is achieved by way of vertical reconciliation (p117).

⁵⁴ Given the writer's dependence on Isaiah, it is doubtful whether Ephesians should be credited with a 'double structure'. It is equally unlikely that this so-called 'double structure' is evidence of an underlying 'hymn'. If the term 'double structure' is applied to the alleged tension between the gnostic 'cosmic wall' (ie between heaven and earth) on the one side and the doing away of the Torah as the main obstacle between Jews and gentiles on the other, it has to be objected that the interpretation which understands φραγμός (Eph 2.14) in accordance with its LXX usage (Isa 5.2) suffices fully. The author is thinking of the Torah as the fence built around God's vineyard, that is Israel. Cf my discussion above of the Jewish background of Eph 2.11ff (pp29-31).

⁵⁵ We saw earlier that it remains uncertain whether the author may have intended an allusion to Isa 9.5f in v14a.

also characteristic of the preceding verse (v14) and the verse that follows immediately (v16). (4) Vv14-17a are each characterised by a threefold emphasis on peace, unity and the removing of enmity. These points are best accommodated in a more refined version of the above chart:⁵⁶

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------------------------------------|
| 12 | gentiles in relation to Jews: separated; no access to God | |
| 13 | once you were far, but now you are near | |
| 14a | Christ brings peace... | Αὐτὸς γάρ ἐστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν |
| | ...creates unity... | ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμώτερα ἐν καὶ |
| | ...removes enmity... | τὸ μεσότοιχον...λύσας, τὴν ἐχθραν... |
| 15 | ...removes enmity... | τὸν νόμον... ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας |
| | ...creates unity... | ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἓνα... |
| | ...brings peace... | καινὸν ἄνθρωπον ποιῶν εἰρήνην |
| 16 | ...creates unity... | ἀποκαταλλάξῃ... ἐν ἐνὶ σώματι... |
| | ...removes enmity... | ἀποκτείνας τὴν ἐχθραν ἐν αὐτῷ |
| 17a | Christ brings peace... | καὶ ἑλθὼν εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνην |
| 17b | ...to you who come from afar and to those near | |
| 18f | gentiles in relation to Jews: unified; common access to God | |

It would be tempting to relate this outline to the proposed reconstructions of underlying hymnic material and to argue—against any hymnic reconstruction—that nearly all of the clauses and phrases found in these verses are integral to the author's train of thought; there is no apparent need to attempt to identify layers of tradition. Nevertheless, a couple of phrases appear to be surplus to what is 'structurally' necessary—this does not in itself make them 'redactional'—and perhaps allow us a glimpse into the author's main concern. They include, above all, the christological and salvation-historical references ἐν τῇ σαρκί and διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ (vv14,16 - cf Col 1.20). Both these coincide with the typically Pauline emphases on the doing away with the Law by Christ's crucifixion (Rom 7.4-6; Gal 3.13) and the role of the crucifixion in the removal of enmity and the bringing about of 'vertical' reconciliation (Rom 5.10; cf Col 1.22

⁵⁶ There is some uncertainty as to whether the phrase "enmity in his flesh" belongs to the end of v14 rather than the beginning of v15. Whichever view is adopted has little material impact on the basic validity of the chart. The difficulty with the first view—ie that the phrase belongs to v14—is that the participle splits its objects which stand in apposition. The difficulty with the second view—ie that the phrase belongs to v15—is that the phrase seems rather far removed from the alternative participle καταργήσας. The various possibilities are discussed by Abbott, *Ephesians*, 61f.

and, implicitly, 2 Cor 5.18ff).⁵⁷ In the present context they too extend the author's christological/soteriological emphasis so evident in the addition of the phrase ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ to the Isaianic *near/far* motif alluded to in v13.⁵⁸ In this way the author comments on or enhances the triplet consisting of the removal of enmity, the creation of unity and the bringing of peace.

To sum up, the motif of the gentiles who once were outsiders in God's dealings with his people but who now enjoy Israel's privileges (vv12f), is being developed in vv14a-17a by means of a three-fold christocentric triplet: Christ brought peace and unity by removing enmity which existed simultaneously between gentiles and Jews and between mankind and God.⁵⁹ This argument is underpinned christologically and is then followed by a return to the motif of the gentiles who have been brought near from afar. Before ascertaining the extent to which this pattern is based on the OT material used, its main elements need to be examined in somewhat more detail.

"Annulling the Law of commandments in regulations"

The radical statements—of which v15a forms the centre—about the function of the Law are framed by OT echoes (vv13f) and allusions (v17). Elsewhere in the letter (4.8-10; 6.2) OT references are also related to the author's view of the Torah. Thus it is imperative to examine the role of the Law in ch 2.15. The Law is seen as directly involved in the ethnic enmity which the author attempts to dispel. The double reference to ἔχθρα counterbalances the threefold peace acclamation in vv15,17. Announcing and creating peace (Isa 57.19) is equivalent to erasing hostility (v15). The Law of commandments was a stumbling block to peace.⁶⁰ The description of the Law of commandments in regulations as a μεσότοιχον τοῦ φραγμοῦ (v14)

⁵⁷ This emphasis on Christ's death is evident also elsewhere in the epistle (1.7; 5.2,25).

⁵⁸ The focus on Christ's blood may serve to show that there is no need for the gentile who comes to Christ to offer any sacrifice such as would have been expected from gentile proselytes to Judaism—this is a different emphasis from Kirby, *Ephesians*, 157f and Meuzelaar, *Leib*, 99 who set the phrase in parallel to the proselyte's offering in the temple.

⁵⁹ Given the integrity of this three-fold argument there is no compelling case for claiming that either v18 or v19 forms a more natural continuation of v13 than vv14ff.

⁶⁰ Martin, "Reconciliation", 174 calls this a "more sinister understanding of the Torah" than displayed in Paul and points to Rom 7.4,12; and Gal 3.10. But Ephesians does not criticise the Torah qualitatively, as is clear from ch 6.2f. The reference to the πολιτεία (cf Hengel, "Synagogeninschrift", 180f) and the covenants in v12 implies the author's acceptance of the Torah in times prior to the cross (v16).

can be compared with similar expressions in texts such as the Epistle of Aristeas 139 and 142. The first of these terms is a standard expression for the partitioning between terraced houses.⁶¹ In Isa 59.2 (LXX)—a passage well-known to the author of Ephesians—a derivative of the term is employed for the separation created between Israel and God as a result of the people's transgressions.⁶² The second term is used frequently in the NT for the fence around vineyards and fields. This same use can be paralleled in Isa 5.2. The leading idea is of God protecting his vineyard. It is taken up by the rabbis⁶³ and, as we saw, in the Epistle of Aristeas 139. Aboth 1.1 calls for a fence around the Torah. In 3.13 this fence is identified with the traditions by the elders. They usually took the shape of radicalising an existing command with a view to creating a safety margin.⁶⁴ The amount of such regulations at times led some rabbis to impose a limit.⁶⁵

A number of rabbis make it plain the heathen would not be saved by keeping the Torah;⁶⁶ they would deserve punishment even if they did keep it.⁶⁷ San 58b also suggests that studying the Torah as a non-Israelite is bordering on the immoral. The logic behind this attitude appears to be the conviction that when the Torah had once been offered to the nations, they rejected it.⁶⁸ In contrast to many diaspora Jews, the rabbis emphasised the exclusive character of the Torah as having revelatory significance only for Israel.⁶⁹ Efforts were made to retain the Torah within the borders of Israel.

This brings us, lastly, to the tendency within some strands of Judaism to link Torah and creation. This notion is paralleled in Eph 2.15, thus further undergirding the Jewish backcloth to Eph 2. In Prov 8 and Sir 24 such thinking is based on a hypostatisation and apotheosis of the Torah to the extent of identifying Torah and

⁶¹ Caird, *Ephesians*, 57.

⁶² This is defined typically in vv4,8f,14f as a lack of righteousness, truth and peace. Precisely these terms feature prominently throughout Eph 2.14,15,17 and indeed the entire letter. Notice especially the combination of *truth* and *righteousness* within a single verse in ch 4.24; 5.9 and 6.14. Both writings also agree in attributing separation from God to sin and transgression (Isa 59.2,12; Eph 2.1,5).

⁶³ LevR 105b and 106a; BB 91b; P^esiqR 90b.

⁶⁴ For instance Ber 1.1 and Shab 13a.

⁶⁵ GenR 12d.

⁶⁶ DeutR 196d; NumR 138b; Midr SS 6.1f and M^ekh Exod 44b among others.

⁶⁷ San 58b repeatedly argues that non-Israelites who keep the Sabbath deserve death.

⁶⁸ M^ekh Exod 20.2 and Sif Deut 343 and 396 (cf Sanders, *Judaism*, 211). But for a recent and rather ferocious exchange between Meyer and Sanders on the subject of mis-representing rabbinic opinion see Sanders, "Indefensible", 463-77.

⁶⁹ Hengel, *Judaism*, 175.

Wisdom, with the act of creation being considered a function of Wisdom. In Ephesians the author uses such language to bring home the truth that in Christ God has done no less than to replace the old order or creation, including the Torah framework, by something—or should we say 'someone'—entirely new, that is a new person created in God's likeness (cf ch 4.24).

"To create in himself a new man"

In discussing Isa 57.19 above, I pointed to the unusual occurrence of the term בְּרָא in the expression "I will create the fruit of the lips", that is peace.⁷⁰ The phrase indicates that the peace announcement is authenticated by the same creative and sustaining power of God which stands behind creation (Gen 1). The idea of the soteriological relevance of creation is found repeatedly in the middle section of Isaiah.⁷¹ In rabbinic Judaism this framework is applied to proselytism. A heathen coming to know God is as though he had been newly created by whoever helped him to attain knowledge of God.⁷² The link between this rabbinic strand and Ephesians consists of the eschatological quality of such a new creation.⁷³ A slight difference between the two is that Ephesians envisages a new man,⁷⁴ whereas rabbinic thinking speaks more generally of new creation and new birth. However, Ephesians also relates the new man to both categories (2.1,5,15; 4.24).⁷⁵ Can we go further in attempting to shed light on v15b?

In the NT the term κτίσις is normally reserved for God's creation. It is also a Pauline term for the conversion of the believer (Eph 2.15; 4.24; Col 3.10; 2 Cor 5.17; Gal 6.15). Because of this concept Paul can argue that neither circumcision nor non-circumcision is relevant

⁷⁰ It is of course impossible to decide to what extent the writer of Ephesians would have been aware of the Hebrew text of Isa 57.19—LXX has no reference to creation and the fruit of lips.

⁷¹ Aymer, *Ktisis*, 60.

⁷² GenR 39; 84.4 and Midr Ps 69a.

⁷³ Even the eschatological Israel is thought to be like a new creation after having shown repentance (P^siqR 109a). See also Mussner, *Christus*, 96. The concept of the eschatological new creation goes back to the OT itself, as Sjöberg, "Wiedergeburt", 69ff shows.

⁷⁴ In contrast to Mussner, *Christus*, 86; Gnllka, *Epheser*, 140 and Stuhlmacher, "Friede", 352. Best, *Body*, 152-4 shows that the new man is to be understood as an individual. This is consistent with 2 Cor 5.15 and Gal 3.28; 6.15 as well as Eph 4.24 where precisely the same combination κτίζω + καίνος ἄνθρωπος occurs. This combination may well be reminiscent of Gen 1.26. Compare also Rom 6.4 and Col 3.10f. Eph 3.16 highlights one specific aspect of this new man: his interaction with the Spirit of God (cf 1.13).

⁷⁵ Jam 1.18.

(Gal 6.15). What counts is God's creative or renewing activity (Eph 2.15). Col 3.10 clearly alludes in this connection to the first/old creation. Reconciliation between the two ethnic groups can only be achieved by him who created humankind in the first place. In bringing the two together God's creative intervention is required, a principle which lies at the heart of Isa 57.19 (cf Eph 2.13,17). The notion of the creation of the new man is thus connected with the Prophet's announcement of the creation (בְּרָא) of peace between those afar and those near. The "fruit of the lips", that is the creation of peace, is identified in Ephesians as applying to the unity between Jews and gentiles resulting from the cross of Christ. This would enable us to explain the syntactically odd phrase ποιῶν εἰρήνην in v15 as being reminiscent of the double exclamation "peace, peace" in Isa 57.19.

Mussner had suggested that the combination κρίζειν + ἄνθρωπος may also be reminiscent of the creation account in Gen 1.26 (cf Col 3.10).⁷⁶ While the same is conceivable for Ephesians, it is preferable to see Eph 2.15 as being based on Isa 57 which was already on the author's mind in v13. This has the added advantage of accounting for the slight irregularity of arguing that two groups became one man. Ephesians here takes up a notion expressed in Col (cf Gen 1), but reapplies it in the light of Isa 57. Both Scriptures are linked by the key word "creation". In speaking of the creation of a new man, Ephesians parallels Christ's act of creation through the cross to that of God in creating both earth and man. Christologically this is highly significant as the creation of the new man is set in correlation to that of humankind at the beginning of history. The creation of the new man is regarded as a new pivot of God's creating activity.⁷⁷

"Christ came to announce peace"

Eph 2.17a immediately raises the question whether this phrase refers to Christ's incarnation or even to the apostolic preaching of the kerygma.⁷⁸ Is the author concerned with Christ's earthly ministry or

⁷⁶ Merklein's suggestion ("Tradition", 97) that the new man concept originated within an environment of "Hellenistic-Jewish speculation is not necessary. For the author's interest in the early chapters of Genesis see my discussions of Eph 1.22 (chapter two) and 5.31 (chapter seven).

⁷⁷ In the words of 2 Cor 5.17: "whoever is in Christ is a new creation, the old has gone and the new has arrived."

⁷⁸ For lists of commentators who opt for these suggestions cf Gnika, *Epheser*, 145 nn4 and 5 and Schlier, *Epheser*, 173.

with his salvific mission in general?⁷⁹ No doubt the crucifixion played a major role in the writer's thoughts—cf ἐν τῇ σαρκί and διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ. But the question remains how far ἐλθὼν is to be confined to just one specific aspect of Christ's ministry.

It is noticeable that virtually the entire vocabulary used in vv13 and 17 can be accounted for by pointing to three verses in Isaiah. The exception is ἐλθὼν which does not have a clear referent and which comes rather unexpectedly. The crucifixion (v16) can hardly be described as an arrival or coming and having mentioned the crucifixion, the author is equally unlikely to refer back to one particular detail of Christ's earthly life. Considering the careful weaving together of material originating from Isaiah, the likeliest point of reference may well be the OT material itself. Grammatically ἐλθὼν depends on the succeeding verb and object, that is the material from Isa 52.7 and 57.19 which serves to develop the thrust of v14.

As we saw, the Isaianic texts employed have a definite future thrust.⁸⁰ Salvation is linked to a day in the future (52.3,6; 57.19). The demand is to "make way, make way, prepare the way, remove the stumbling block from the way of my people!" (57.14-21). The language indicates the awaiting of someone's arrival (cf 40.3; 49.11). The phrase anticipates the salvific revelation of God's glory (40.5; 49.13). This anticipation is picked up in Eph 2.17—"he came..."—and applied to Christ's earthly ministry. The framework underlying the use of Isaiah is therefore one of promise and fulfilment, although this is not explicit. This specific background could only be appreciated by readers who were familiar with the main lines of Isaiah. While the quotation itself would have been meaningful without any such knowledge, the salvation-historical dimension of an otherwise seemingly timeless soteriological statement could be more fully understood from the Isaianic background. Christ came in fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy. The claim that "he came" refers to the time between Christ's incarnation⁸¹ and his crucifixion, is theologically correct, but the emphasis falls especially on the fulfilment aspect of Christ's coming and dying in

⁷⁹ Conzelmann, *Epheser*, 100f.

⁸⁰ Notice the change in tense when the Prophet or God come to address the future of the righteous ones (57.2,12,13 and also vv14,16,18). The "fruit of the lips" (v19) is therefore prophetic in character.

⁸¹ The birth of the 'Messiah' features in Isa 9.5 (cf 11.1) and may therefore stand in the background of Eph 2.14a.

the flesh.⁸² The coming and the announcing of peace in Eph 2.17 are almost seen as one and the same thing.

Finally, some scholars make the observation that Ephesians uniquely attributes the reconciliatory work to Christ rather than to the Father.⁸³ Perhaps this can be explained on the basis of Isa 9.5 (MT) which possibly shines through in Eph 2.14a, where the child to be born is himself the "Prince of peace" and the inauguration of the age of peace (11.1-8). Apparently the Prophet saw no contradiction between this and the assertion that "YHWH's zeal will achieve this".⁸⁴

Having considered the unfolding train of thought and the underlying pattern of vv12-19 it is now possible to bring out the precise role played in these verses by the material ultimately traceable to Isaiah.

Significance, Function and Understanding: Isa 57.19 in Eph 2

A number of questions are raised by the role of Isa 57 in this chapter. Did the writer go back to Isaiah on his own initiative or was his allusion to Isaiah triggered secondarily by his use of common Jewish proselyte terminology in v13? Did the author intend to echo Isaiah as early as in v13, thus preparing the way for a more explicit use of Isaiah in v17? Various other questions follow naturally. Was Isaiah used purely as a terminological vehicle or should it be regarded as a major source for the author's argument? Does v18 interpret the OT allusion of v17 and what is the significance of the combination of Isa 52.7 with ch 57.19? Perhaps the most significant question asks how the use of terminology borrowed from Isaiah relates to the gentile readership intended in Eph 2.11ff.

A customary response to these questions is to acknowledge the use of the language borrowed from Isa 57.19 in Eph 2.17, but to argue that there is a significant difference between OT Vorlage and NT appropriation. Whereas Isaiah employs the *near/far* metaphor for Jews in the dispersion or exile and Jews at home, the argument runs,⁸⁵ Ephesians, in the light of Jewish proselyte terminology, re-

⁸² This has not been appreciated by a number of scholars, notably Gnllka, *Epheser*, 145f and Abbott, *Ephesians*, 66f. Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 118 denies any significance of ἐλθῶν and thus fails entirely to see the fulfilment aspect of v17 and also the full relevance of the phrases ἐν τῇ σαρκί and διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ.

⁸³ Dibelius, *Epheser*, 70 and Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 117.

⁸⁴ Mussner, *Christus*, 101 is wrong when he claims that in Isaiah YHWH himself is the (exclusive?) bringer of peace.

⁸⁵ Eg Barth, *Ephesians*, 260 and 276 and Lindemann, *Epheserbrief*, 51.

applies the metaphor to gentiles (*far*) and Jews (*near*). In view of rabbinic texts such as NumR 8.4 which interpret Isa 57.19 along such lines this argument appears plausible.⁸⁶ On this assumption the use of Isa 57 in Eph 2.17 has been mediated by common Jewish proselyte terminology (cf Eph 2.13). No doubt this is a possible scenario. But the question arises whether such mediation has to be presupposed. Could the use of Isa 57.19 in v17 not be much more direct? Quite possibly Isa 57.19 dominated the author's thought as early as v13.⁸⁷ Lincoln rejects this on the grounds that the motif of those who were afar having come near is absent from Isa 57.19.⁸⁸ This is of course true; the verse only mentions those far off and those near, and not the having come near of those far off. Nevertheless, it is likely that this verse has to be understood in view of other verses in this part of Isaiah which leave no doubt that the Prophet used such geographical notions to convey YHWH's desire to bring home or gather those who bear his name (Isa 43.6f; 49.5f.12,22; 51.11; 54.7; 56.6-8; 60.4f.9,13). In other words, the near and far motif in Isaiah implies the notion of coming home. The lack of explicit parallel for the phrase ἐγενήθητε [ἐγγυς]—ie having come near instead of a simple being near—in Isa 57.19 does not rule out the strong possibility that the verse which shaped Eph 2.17 also influenced v13.

It is not appropriate to settle the question of the mediated or direct influence of Isa 57 on Ephesians purely on grounds of verbal agreement. The matter may ultimately depend on whether or not Jewish discussion of proselytism, which builds on Isa 57.19, brings out a perspective which is presupposed in Ephesians, but which cannot be traced back to Isaiah itself. Many would argue that this is indeed the case in that Ephesians presupposes a shift from applying the near/far motif to Jews at home and Jews in exile (Isaiah) to its application to Jews and proselytes which is characteristic of some—but by no means all⁸⁹—rabbinic strands of interpretation. Ephesians then applies the metaphor to gentile (v13) and Jewish (v17) followers of Christ, rather than to proselytes to Judaism.

Alternatively one might argue that, at least as far the application of the *far* motif to non-Jews is concerned, Ephesians does little more

⁸⁶ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 147 also points to Midr Sam 28.6 as a text which refers Isa 57.19 to gentile proselytes

⁸⁷ An example where the impending use of OT material influenced the language (σάρξ) of an earlier verse is ch 5.29—cf the quotation from the OT in v31.

⁸⁸ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 138.

⁸⁹ Cf bBer 34b; NumR 11.7 and M^ekh Exod 20.2 which apply the motif to inner Jewish divisions.

than to bring out a perspective already inherent in Isaiah. It has been argued above that Isaiah does not reserve the *near/far* motif to Jews, although the Prophet undoubtedly thought of Jews primarily. There are numerous verses which suggest that YHWH's principle of gathering his followers from afar is not restricted to Jews but serves a more universal purpose. "It is not enough that you be my servant to establish the tribes of Jacob..., I appoint you a light to the nations that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth" (ch 49.6 cf 52.10). The subtheme continues in ch 55.4f: "I made him [David] a witness for peoples... and nations that you do not know will hasten to you." The most explicit passage is undoubtedly ch 56.3-8:

Let no foreigner who has joined himself to the Lord say, "The Lord will surely exclude me from his people" ...for this is what the Lord says: "To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant - to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off. And foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to serve him, to love the name of the Lord, and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant - these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations." The Sovereign Lord declares - he who gathers the exiles of Israel: "I will gather still others to them besides those already gathered." (NIV)

YHWH's welcome into his temple is no longer tied to Israel 'according to the flesh'. The so-called great invitation of ch 55.1-8 is reiterated in ch 56.1-8 in a more explicitly universal fashion. Ch 60 shows furthermore that the Prophet is in no doubt that "the riches of the nations will come" to him (v5) and that "the islands" look to him for salvation (v9) and are eager to rebuild Jerusalem's walls (v10). It is hardly surprising that we should come across rabbinic discussions of proselytism which find in Isa 57.19 a convenient way of referring to gentiles who are willing and eager to please and follow the God of Israel. The use of *far off* language for non-Jews elsewhere in the OT⁹⁰ will undoubtedly have facilitated this use of Isa 57.19, but there is enough in Isaiah itself to warrant such an understanding. One might go as far as to argue that any interpretation of this verse which restricts the metaphor to Jews in exile and Jews at home fails to take account of one of the major developments characteristic of these

⁹⁰ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 138f lists Deut 28.49; 29.22; 1 Kgs 8.41; Jer 5.15 and notably Isa 5.26.

chapters in Isaiah: the movement from a focus on Israel as the elect to a considerably more ethnically universalistic concern.

In the light of these considerations it appears reasonable to conclude that the congruity between the influence of Isaiah 57.19 in Eph 2 and in traditional Jewish proselyte terminology should not necessarily be regarded as evidence that the use of Isaiah's *near/far* terminology was introduced to the author of Ephesians (v13) via non-Biblical Jewish discussion of proselytism.⁹¹ Such an assumption is possible, but unnecessary. In view of the author's excellent knowledge of Israel's Biblical Scriptures displayed elsewhere, particularly where Isaiah is concerned, the more straightforward explanation has to be that Ephesians, like the rabbinic strands mentioned, drew out what was already inherent in Isaiah and re-applied it with Christ, not Judaism, at the centre.

If the above argument is acceptable, the likelihood increases that the writer of Ephesians was thinking of Isa 57 as early as in v13. On this view v13 anticipates v17.⁹² This is different from the argument which regards v13 as having been sparked off by traditional proselyte terminology (v13)—rather than by Isa 57—which then caused the use of Isa 57 in v17.⁹³ This would also mean that the role played by Isa 57 in Eph 2 may well have been more formative than one would expect if the use of the OT quotation in v17 had been prompted only secondarily.⁹⁴ Support for the view that the writer had Isa 57 in mind as early as in v13 may also be derived from the structure of the passage suggested above: v17b forms a bracket with v13 in a way similar to vv12 and 18f. From this a further observation follows. If the double parenthesis which consists of the motifs of the gentiles' relationship to Israel and the having brought near of those far off in

⁹¹ Barth, *Ephesians*, 276 feels that he has to argue that the use of Isa 57.19 in Eph 2 is to some extent "a last step in a development of the Jewish exegesis that had started long before the time of Christ and Paul." There is little reason to doubt the validity of the second half of this statement, but given the data of Isaiah itself there is no need to postulate that the understanding of Isaiah manifest in Ephesians had to have been mediated via such Jewish exegesis.

⁹² This the view also of Gnlika, *Epheser*, 145, Lindemann, *Epheserbrief*, 51 and Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 111.

⁹³ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 138 and especially 146.

⁹⁴ Nevertheless one does not have to go as far as stating that vv14-16 "are intended as an exposition of the Isaiah passage", as Barth, *Ephesians*, 276 appears to hold. To be aware of the suitability of the OT passage and, on account of this, to deliberately cite this text is not the same as writing an exposition of it. We should therefore be careful not to speak automatically of the author's intended "authentic interpretation of the prophetic text" (*ibid*).

vv12f and 17-19 is deliberate, the progression in thought between vv12f and 17-19 is important:

vv12f: you gentiles used to be separated from Israel's rights and without God, but now you have been brought near

vv17-19: now that you have been brought near you share in the privileges of God's people and have direct access to God

It is noteworthy that the writer no longer speaks of Israel (as in v12), but of members in God's household. The gentiles are not being incorporated into Israel; they become part of a new people of God.⁹⁵ To emphasise the point, v20 brings out the foundation of this new people: what matters are the "Apostles and Prophets", not, one might add, the *Law* and the Prophets. By this point the role of the people of Israel along with her regulations, laws and covenants has receded into the background. A new people has been created, along with what is in effect a new temple (v21).

It is difficult not to notice at this point certain parallels between our author's discussion and the original context of the OT material he employed. The Prophet's exposition of God's intended universalism provided ideal scriptural source material for Ephesians which could be used by the writer to underpin his bold assertions. With the exception of the mention of the Spirit, v18 reads almost like a summary of the universal thrust of Isa 52 - 60: Jews and non-Jews share in principle the same access to God (cf also ch 3.12). The 'access' language employed here has been traced by Caird to Greco-Roman political imagery.⁹⁶ Lincoln traced the imagery to OT thinking, especially passages such as Isa 56.⁹⁷ In view of the author's knowledge of these chapters of Isaiah this view is to be preferred. Eph 2.18 could perhaps even be understood as a celebration of the fulfilment in Christ of God's message for Israel conveyed through the Prophet. The Prophet's vision was one in which proselytes would be invited to worship God alongside the Jews in God's house (ch 56.7f). In Eph 2 this vision has become a Christian reality: gentile converts and Jewish followers of Christ share common access to God (v18) and share God's house (v19), God's new temple (v21f).

⁹⁵ Similarly Caird, *Letters*, 56f. The fact that the author no longer assumes automatically that all Jews are members of the new people of God is clear from his omission of the personal pronoun in the final phrase of v17. Compare also the slightly polemical phrase ...ὅπο τῆς λεγωμένης περιτομῆς ἐν σαρκὶ χειροποιήτου.

⁹⁶ Caird, *Prison*, 60.

⁹⁷ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 149.

Naturally Ephesians places significantly more emphasis on the incoming gentiles than had been done by the Prophet. Also, whereas in Isaiah and in Jewish proselyte discussion the bringing near of gentiles had the aim of turning a non-Jew into a Jew, here the idea is that the gentile, along with the Jew, becomes a member of the new people of God. V17 effectively parallels gentiles in Christ with Jews in Christ. Nevertheless, v18 can probably be seen as an application of a principle which formed part already of the Prophet's message (ch 56.3ff). Methodologically this is not dissimilar to the assigning of one peace reference each to those far off and to those near (v17), something which goes formally, though not materially, beyond Isa 57.19, but which probably serves to amplify the vertical dimension of the Prophet's peace message. This is not to play down the difference in scope between the Prophet's message about gentile proselytes and the application of the *far* terminology to potentially all gentile Christians in Eph 2. Indeed, it is quite likely that the writer of Ephesians regards the extent of the gentile response to the gospel as part of the very mystery which had not previously been revealed to the OT Prophets (Eph 3.5).

Earlier I suggested that the combination of the allusion to Isa 52.7 with the term ἐλθῶν in v17a conveys a sense of the author's understanding of Christ's work as fulfilment of the Prophet's vision.⁹⁸ Perhaps it has now become clear that his desire to portray the relevance of the historical Christ event in language borrowed from Isaiah's most universalistic passage (chs 52 - 60) was more deep seated than has commonly been acknowledged. That which the Prophet hinted at occasionally is now seen by our writer to have been brought about in its fulness. The use of material drawn from Isaiah may well have been more calculated and deliberate than the writer of Ephesians has often been assumed. The author's choice of OT material is undoubtedly due to the fact that at this point he addresses specifically the gentiles among his readership. Isa 52 and 57 served for the writer of Ephesians to reassure them of their role in God's purposes for his newly created people; even at the time of the Prophet God wanted non-Jews to be able to share his people's worship. Second, the author utilises these OT phrases to point out both to gentile and Jewish readers their equal standing before God. Third, they serve to remind his readers that his polemic against the

⁹⁸ There is little explicit evidence of a full-fledged promise-fulfilment framework for the author's use of the Jewish Scriptures, but given the total number of OT usages in this epistle not much can be read into this.

Law as a social barrier is entirely in keeping with the Prophet's message.

It has already emerged that of the two Isaianic verses employed in v17. Isa 57.19 is by far the more dominant, both in terminology and thought. We have also seen that, in view of the gentile addressees, any use of Isa 52.7 had to be supplemented by a passage with a more universal outlook, a passage which the writer found precisely in ch 57.19. Moreover, Isa 57.19 provides a stronger statement than ch 52.7: in the former peace is "created", in the latter it is "announced". Strictly speaking most of v17 could be explained on the basis of Isa 57.19,⁹⁹ although, in view of the occurrence of the same verse in ch 6.15, this is not wholly appropriate. Why, then, did the writer use Isa 52.7?

At first glance it appears that the writer's rendering is closer to the Hebrew text of Isaiah than to LXX.¹⁰⁰ Possibly this is due to the combination of Isa 52.7 with ch 57.19 which necessitated the substitution of εἰρήνην (Isa 57.19) for ἀκοὴν εἰρήνης (Isa 52.7) to provide a smooth transition. In effect this leaves only one word (εὐηγγελίσατο) which can be traced back to Isa 52.7. Hence it is conceivable that Isa 52.7 provided not much more for the author than a link which enabled him to tie together the peace ministry of Christ (vv14-6) and the language borrowed from Isa 57.19 (v17).¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, the weight of εὐηγγελίσατο must not be played down. As Caird reminds us, "'Preached' is a poor translation for a word which denotes a royal proclamation that hostilities are at an end."¹⁰² The author is at pains to point out that the peace of the gospel put paid to the hostile nature of the relationship between Jews and non-Jews. In this way the spiritual, and by implication political, connotations of peace in Isa 52.7 are translated into the context of the author's addressees.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ It is just possible that even the term εὐαγγελίζομαι could be related to the "fruit of the lips" in ch 57.19, rather than alluding to Isa 52.7.

¹⁰⁰ Isa 52.7 LXX runs εὐαγγελιζομένου ἀκοὴν εἰρήνης.

¹⁰¹ This is similar to v14a—Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἔστιν ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν—which may preserve a vague echo of Isa 9.5f, but which functions similarly to v17a, that is as a means to link the near/far language—again derived from Isa 57.19, but this time in v13—and the discussion which centres on the Christ event (vv14-6). If this is so, Eph 2.14a and v17a show how the writer was concerned to provide a firm connection between the reconciliatory work of Christ and the Prophet's message of peace.

¹⁰² Caird, *Ephesians*, 60.

¹⁰³ There is some difference of opinion among commentators as to whether we can deduce much of significance about the intended recipients' background from Eph 2.11ff. At least in part the discussion has to centre around the author's strong

It is not insignificant that, especially in Isa 55 - 60, peace denotes both a healthy vertical relationship between God and his people as well as entry into the people of God (ch 56.3) and therefore common worship of Israel's God (ch 56.5-7). Ethnic background ceases to be a hindrance. As this is also the explicit message of Eph 2.18, we can safely assume that the author's choice and combination of Isa 52.7 and 57.19 was both deliberate and careful. Probably we can go as far as seeing in his use of Isa 52.7 and 57.19 confirmation for the interpretation which understands peace in Eph 2.15, the centre-piece of this passage, as a primarily vertical notion which has horizontal implications. Since this dual reference is also evident in the OT material used by the writer, there remain no grounds for claiming the so-called double structure as evidence of the author's attempted—but clumsy?¹⁰⁴—integration of an underlying hymn.

Conclusion

Ephesians alludes to the view that the Torah, presumably including the oral traditions attached to it, protects the people of God from non-Israelites. It argues implicitly for the removal of what had been intended as God's constructive guideline for Israel, but had become in the author's perception a casuistic barrier separating the gentiles not only from the people of God, but also from the benefit of attaining knowledge of God's will. Moreover, it is not just legalistic misuse of the Torah which is attacked in Ephesians. Torah itself is

language, eg 'hostility', 'abrogation', the 'breaking down of the fence', etc. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 143 is sceptical and argues that the writer—for Lincoln a successor of Paul—feels he no longer has to tread as delicately as the Paul of Romans. Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 112 and 119f raises the question whether the author wrote out of an „aktuellen Interesse für das Verhältnis der Heidenchristen zu den Judenchristen in der Kirche.“ He speculates with Fischer, *Tendenz*, 86-88 whether gentile Christians were unwilling to let Jewish followers of Christ observe their Jewish traditions and rituals, but concludes that the harsh language against the validity of the Torah does not support such an assumption. Schnackenburg might have gone further by speculating that such language points in the direction of a continued emphasis on the Torah—by Jewish Christians? former proselytes or God-fearers? This might be supported by the neuter form in the phrase ὁ ποιήσας τὰ ἀμφοτέρω ἐν v14 which could be taken (with Merklein, *Christus*, 30 and 40) as a reference to the two spheres of Jews and gentiles which continued to exist, but which in the author's view should have disappeared in view of the completed peace making process of Christ.

¹⁰⁴ Barth, *Epheser*, 261 points to Schille as an illustration of the difficulties involved in claiming to have recovered the underlying hymn—presumably on the basis of reasonably clear criteria?—but also that the hymn is „unentwirrbar“ and „vorzüglich durchkomponiert“ (Schille, *Hymnen*, 26 and 31). One wonders whether there is not a real danger here of wanting "the best of both worlds".

exposed as anachronistic if understood as an ongoing covenant document between God and his people. Christ came - therefore the Torah had to go. There are in any case no longer two ethnic groups which need separating. There is strictly speaking neither Jewish Christian, nor gentile Christian. There are those in Christ and those who are not.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, it is not a question of separation, but of free access (v18). Whether or not the Torah was in any way qualitatively inferior is at this point secondary; the crux is that it has been superseded by him who came (cf Gal 3 and 4 as well as Rom 10.4f).

CONCLUSIONS

The so-called double structure with Eph 2.13-17 is best explained not on the assumption of an underlying hymn, but in the light of the use of Isaiah throughout these verses. While the Prophet does not draw out the ethnic implications of his message in any detail, Ephesians, like Romans, takes up Isaiah and makes more explicit the concept of gentile participation in the worship of God. The author's implied hermeneutical framework enables him to regard the Christ event as the ultimate fulfilment of the Prophet's vision, although here this should not be misunderstood in the sense of a narrow promise-fulfilment literalism. The writer does not explicitly use Isa 52.7 or 57.19 as predictions of the Christ event; rather, he sees the Christ event as the decisive salvation-historical extension and culmination of a principle which he detected already in the Prophet's vision. No matter how latent the presence of this principle in Isaiah may have been—at least in comparison with Eph 2—it formed a decisive part of Isa 55-60.

The writer applies the term ἐλθὼν to Christ's entire ministry, and especially to the death on the cross as the point in time at which the purpose of the Torah had been fulfilled. The pastoral thrust of the use of Isaiah consists of the argument that if there is no Scriptural ground for maintaining ethnic separation, how could there be any tension between Jewish and gentile followers of Christ. It is probable that Eph 2.11ff reflects at least some measure of such tension, as evidenced also by the writer's polemic in the verses sandwiched

¹⁰⁵ The creation of the new and trans-ethnic man through the cross of Christ (v15) may be seen as a polemic against Jewish Torah ontology which attributed creation as a divine act to the Torah in as far as the latter was perceived to be a function of Wisdom.

between the Isaianic material. The terminology of Eph 2 can of course also be compared to Jewish proselyte discussion. This is to be explained in the light of the influence Isaiah exercised on both. The distinctive nature of the use of Isaiah in Eph 2 is primarily due to its christocentric application.

A further theological contribution of Eph 2 consists of its insistence on the abrogation of the Jewish Torah at the time of Christ's crucifixion. The underlying notion is the incompatibility of Christ and Torah. It remains to be seen whether the author's Torah polemic must be placed against a background of what he considered to be a specific misuse of the Torah in Western Asia Minor. What is clear is that in the light of Christ having come he considered anachronistic any use of the Torah as a binding covenant document. If what has been argued so far can be substantiated further, Käsemann's well-known thesis regarding the main purpose of Ephesians as being primarily a call to gentile Christians to appreciate their Jewish heritage¹⁰⁶ needs to be qualified. We discover in Eph 2 a variety of interrelated concerns, only one of which is that put forward by Käsemann. There is also an implicit call to Judaizing Christians, Jewish or gentile,¹⁰⁷ to abandon their focus on the Torah in favour of the new man who is no longer subject to ethnic origin or "commandments in regulations". While Käsemann's focus does justice to the emphasis on the gentiles among the intended audience in ch 2, it disregards that the problems addressed with the help of Scriptural material are to do with presuppositions of Jewish, or in any case Judaizing Christianity.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ This view is still influential. See MacDonald, *Churches*, 132; Sampley, *Flesh*, 160 and Martin, "Reconciliation", 159-67.

¹⁰⁷ It is impossible to say whether the author's use of proselyte language borrowed from Isa 57.19 was sparked off by the presence of gentiles who used to be Godfearers or proselytes to Judaism, but who turned to Christianity while retaining a Judaizing emphasis. But as elsewhere in this epistle, one wonders whether his subtle use of scripture does not demand Jewish members of the congregations addressed. However, if the author's use of the OT was indeed aimed at non-Jewish Judaizers, rather than conservative Jewish Christians, we would have to imagine that the letter's implied audience included former proselytes and/or Godfearers who were attracted by Christianity as the perceived heir of Judaism. Such an intended readership has in recent years also been suggested for Luke's Gospel—cf Nolland's introduction in *Luke*, xxxii-xxxiii.

¹⁰⁸ Cf Rom 9.30-10.21 and see Hübner's study *Gottes Ich*, 86-99. Significantly Ephesians too is at pains to set out the unity achieved between Jews and gentiles in Christ. In view of this emphasis Pokorny, *Epheser*, 12f is probably correct when he reads our text against a backcloth of tension between Jewish and non-Jewish Christians. For a different view cf Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 132f.

The author's particular skill consisted of his ability to appropriate OT material in a way which is full of meaning and which presents a challenge to its recipients without running the risk of being incomprehensible to those who were not in a position to appreciate the full OT background. It would be wise to avoid claims that the author must have been "well versed in rabbinic methods of interpretation".¹⁰⁹ While this may be so, it cannot be established on the basis of this particular text.¹¹⁰ The author's interpretation may have been aided somewhat by Jewish proselyte discussion, but it can be based firmly on the data available in Isaiah itself. Hence it is better to see his use of Isaiah as evidence of his excellent knowledge of this document. It has emerged that his argument in Eph 2.13-18 is closely tied up with the Prophet's vision. While it would be unwarranted to call these verses an exposition of Isaiah, the writer's recourse on Isaiah was more than a mere borrowing of suitable theological language. Isa 57 and to a lesser extent ch 52 played a significant part in the shaping of Eph 2.11ff. Probably this is even true of ch 56, albeit much more indirectly and certainly not in any linguistic sense.

¹⁰⁹ So Caird, *Letters*, 56. Schnackenburg, *Epheser* speaks of typical „urchristlicher Schriftreflexion“ (p118) and „jüdischer Auslegungstradition verpflichtete, aber christlich gewendete Schriftexegese wie in 4,8-10 und 5,31“ (p112).

¹¹⁰ Apart, perhaps, from the combination of two OT texts via keyword association (peace) which is of course a well attested, though not exclusive, aspect of rabbinic methodology. A better hunting ground for rabbinic methodology may well be chs 4.8-10 and 5.31f, although this has yet to be determined—cf my chapters four and seven.

CHAPTER FOUR

PSALM 68.18 AND EPHESIANS 4.8-10

"This is why it says: When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to me. What does 'he ascended' mean except that he also descended to the lower earthly regions? He who descended is the one who ascended higher than all the heavens in order to fill everything."

It is well known that Eph 4.8-10 appears to misquote from Ps 68 to the extent of totally reversing the thrust of the original verse. Whereas the Psalm asserts that "God received (תִּקְחֶנּוּ) gifts from among mankind", Ephesians draws out the implication that God gave (ἔδωκεν) gifts. As Stoeckhardt remarks sarcastically, "one may turn, stretch or תִּקְחֶנּוּ as one will, one will never force it to mean "giving".¹ Despite this warning, the list of attempted harmonisations is long.² Having said that, Schmid is content to point to the frequent NT practice of quoting from memory,³ while Stoeckhardt himself suggests that the writer of Ephesians has no intention of interpreting the quoted Psalm.⁴ Lenski suspects a case of "plainly messianic" exegesis⁵ and Pokorny detects an element of allegory.⁶ Eadie follows Meyer in his proleptic interpretation of תִּקְחֶנּוּ.⁷ There may be a measure of truth in some of these proposals, but they can hardly claim to have solved the basic problem.

A more constructive approach focuses on the evidence of a Targumic tradition which parallels to some extent the Ephesian version of Ps 68.18.⁸ I shall compare various text forms in order to establish possible lines of dependence. It will become evident that this Targumic rendering does not suffice to explain the phenomenon

¹ Stoeckhardt, *Ephesians*, 191.

² Stoeckhardt provides a list for a number of rather extreme examples.

³ Schmid, *Epheser*, 318.

⁴ Stoeckhardt, *Ephesians*, 191.

⁵ Lenski, *Ephesians*, 518.

⁶ Pokorny, "Epheserbrief", 185.

⁷ Eadie, *Ephesians*, 282. Similarly Merklein, *Amt*, 66.

⁸ The most recent major study of this aspect has been conducted by Harris, "Descent" (diss.).

of Eph 4.8. Further comparative material will be drawn mainly from rabbinic texts and the Qumran documents. This will give grounds for the assumption that the author of Ephesians can be credited with a greater degree of originality in his use of this Psalm than has been suggested by those commentators who regard Ephesians at this point as simply reflecting *midrash* or some type of exegetical tradition.⁹

The other proposed solutions have attempted to reconcile Ephesians with the underlying thrust of Ps 68.¹⁰ This approach is favoured by those exegetes who are unwilling to concede that the author of Ephesians may simply have misquoted. In order to evaluate such hypotheses it is necessary to assess the function of v18 within Ps 68 itself. A fresh assessment of the relationship between Ps 68 and Eph 4 and a study of the midrash that follows the quotation is also needed. The present chapter unfolds as follows.

Text Forms Related to Psalm 68 and Ephesians 4.8

Parallels from Qumran and the Rabbinic Literature

Qumran Parallels

Rabbinic Parallels

The Evidence of Psalm 68

The Historical Occasion of Psalm 68

The Structural Role of v18

Psalm 68.18 and Eph 4.8-10

Explanations Offered in the Past

The Formula, Wording and Provenance of the Quotation

Torah and Christ - the Theological Background of Eph 4.8

The Midrash which Follows the Quotation

The Ascent-Descent Theme in Relation to Psalm 68.18 (v9)

The Fulfillment Theme in Relation to the Altered Quotation (v10)

Conclusion: Eph 4.7-11 in Context

⁹ Gnika, *Epheser*, 208f; Mussner, *Epheser*, 122; Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 179f; Lincoln, "Use", 19 and Ellis, *Use*, 144. Mostly these commentators do not envisage a direct appropriation of Jewish exegetical tradition; rather, it is assumed that Ephesians took over an early Christian strand which itself reflects a Jewish exegetical influence. Lindars, *Apologetic*, 44 and 53-5 claims that such a tradition may also have surfaced in Acts 2.33 and possibly 5.32 (for a discussion see Harris, "Descent", 219ff). But despite the list of scholars attempting to prove such a link, this is at best uncertain if not highly unlikely (cf Overfield, *Ascension*, 97f and Bock, *Proclamation*, 181-3) - the verbal links are far too slight. Given that Acts 2.33 is perfectly understandable on the basis of the quotation from Ps 110.1, Lindars' speculative reconstruction (cf Dupont, "Ascension", 219-28) is somewhat unnecessary.

¹⁰ Thus Penner, "Enthronement", 90ff.

TEXT FORMS RELATED TO PS 68.18 AND EPH 4.8

A comparison of Eph 4.8 with the LXX version of Ps 68.18 (LXX: Ps 67.19) shows four differences.¹¹ First there is a change from the second person singular aorist ἀνέβης to the aorist participle ἀναβάς. However, in v9f Ephesians returns to the indicative.¹² Secondly, as Lincoln argues, the change from the finite verb to the aorist participle in LXX Vaticanus "prepares the way for the alteration from the second person singular to the third person in the rest of the citation."¹³ Thirdly and most intriguingly, Ephesians employs the verb ἔδωκεν rather than ἔλαβες, a change which constitutes a complete reversal of meaning.¹⁴ Lastly, while LXX renders the Hebrew אֵל as ἐν, Ephesians has the dative form of the indirect object,¹⁵ as is required by the verb διδωμι.

The main question concerns the literary relationship between Ephesians and other documents featuring Ps 68.18—notably the Targum—and whether these documents can indeed be regarded as evidence for a tradition which might link Eph 4.8 and Ps 68.18 as is generally presupposed.¹⁶ However, apart from the striking similarity in substituting the verb *give* for *take* in both texts,¹⁷ there are no features which link Ephesians more closely with the Targum than with other text forms such as MT and the LXX.¹⁸ In fact, twice Ephesians agrees with LXX and MT against the Targum¹⁹ and is

¹¹ For a helpful chart which compares the relevant text forms (MT, LXX, Targum and Ephesians) consult Harris, "Descent", 137.

¹² Whether or not this indicates the author's knowledge of LXX (ἀνέβης!) is uncertain.

¹³ Lincoln, "Use", 18. Temporal priority cannot be expressed as easily in Hebrew as in Greek. Yet Ephesians wanted to stress precisely the temporal priority of Christ's ascension before the giving of gifts.

¹⁴ Some mss (notably $\aleph^2$ and B) insert καὶ before ἔδωκεν. Despite this relatively strong support, this may represent an attempt to smooth out the text (p^{46} , $\aleph^*$ and A do not have καὶ).

¹⁵ For a list of mss featuring τοῖς ἀνθρώποις cf Rahlfs, *Psalmi*, 190.

¹⁶ See for instance Abbott, *Ephesians*, 112f; Bruce, *Ephesians*, 342f, Harris, "Descent", and Potin, *Fete*, 117-23. Gnllka, *Epheser*, 207 betrays the difficulty with this view when he argues in circular fashion that Ephesians attests the significant age of the tradition preserved in the Targum. This could only be claimed, if at all, as a result of a close comparison of all relevant text forms, something mostly not provided by commentators.

¹⁷ This change brings with it the dative in Ephesians and the different preposition in the Targum.

¹⁸ This has not been taken into serious consideration by Harris, "Descent", 138f.

¹⁹ The term ὕψος replaces οὐρανός. Secondly, there are no pointers to the Torah and to Moses.

therefore, on purely verbal grounds, closer to the former than to the latter. It is also doubtful whether the 'Targumic explanation' addresses the heart of the problem, that is the change of wording in Ephesians. Nevertheless, since a link is at least possible, we must establish what could have led to the particular rendering of the Targumist.²⁰

McNamara suggests that the Targumist may have taken the plural gifts as pointing to the gift *per se*, that is the Torah. Furthermore a transposition of ח in the verb may have led to חלק (distribute).²¹ There would thus be no need to posit a Hebrew original which differed from MT. While this conclusion in itself may be reasonable, it is strange that the Targumist should have failed to use the very verb (חלק) which he is supposed to have mistaken for לקח. Thackeray suggests that the paraphrast may have "mentally substituted" one word for the other because the receiving of gifts seemed not consonant with the majesty of God.²² But Rubinkiewicz points to a problem in regarding this as an instance of *al-tikre*, the deliberate substitution of one word for another by means of metathesis of letters.²³ The Targumist applied v18 not to God but to Moses. Where then, Rubinkiewicz asks, is the theological reason for the supposed metathesis? In applying the Psalm to Moses the Targumist could have retained לקח. Moreover, for the Targumist it would not have been entirely natural to take the plural noun *gifts* as referring to the Torah. There are no such instances in the OT. It is more likely that the Targum reflects a deliberate interpretative element. The Psalm verse needed adapting in order to be applicable to the giving of the Torah. As we shall see below, this is compatible with rabbinic procedure, albeit more radical. Yet, in contrast to rabbinic tradition the Targumist went as far as substituting the verb rather than retaining it and glossing it by employing a different preposition coupled with an indirect object.²⁴

The common assumption that the Targum and Ephesians both go back to an ancient tradition featuring ἔδωκεν also needs to take the dating of the Targum into consideration. Hardly anyone argues for an

²⁰ For the precise wording of the Targum in Hebrew characters see McNamara, *Targum*, 79.

²¹ Ibid, 80.

²² Thackeray, *Thought*, 182.

²³ See Torczyner, "Al-tikre", 79-83.

²⁴ Whether or not this constitutes a serious dichotomy between the Targum and the rabbinic tradition will have to be examined in the following section on rabbinic writings. Only then will it be possible to comment confidently on the likelihood of a pre-Targumic and pre-Pauline strand which quotes Ps 68.18 and features ἔδωκεν.

origin of the Targum prior to the late fifth century AD.²⁵ The majority of scholars would favour an even later date.²⁶ This does not of course exclude the possibility that the Targumist used considerably older traditions.²⁷ But there is nothing to encourage us to assume the existence of a strand which originated prior to the writing of Ephesians and which was available to the author, but which did not reappear until the emergence of the Targum half a millenium later.

Eph 4.8, therefore, is closer to both LXX and MT than to the Targum. Targumic influence on Ephesians seems also unlikely for reasons of dating. The Targumic version is best explained not on the basis of an extremely old, yet hidden, tradition, but as the direct result of theological interests²⁸ which, as we shall see, amounted to a radicalisation of earlier rabbinic tendencies. Ephesians is the first text to change, rather than to reinterpret or gloss, the original wording.

PARALLELS FROM QUMRAN AND THE RABBINIC LITERATURE

It is customary to attempt to explain Eph 4.8 on the basis of extant Jewish sources. We shall see that the discussion revolves primarily around a Targum of the Psalms.

Qumran Parallels

The motif of "leading captives captive" is found twice in the War Scroll (chs 12.10 and 19.2). Both times it describes God's military victories. The covenanters may at this point be reflecting familiarity

²⁵ Bacher's dating of the Targum prior to the Fall of Rome in 476 AD ("Targum", 62) has been rejected by Dalman, *Grammatik*, 34 n2 on the grounds of language. Harris, "Descent", 106 is an exception in that he proposes a fourth century origin for the Targum Psalms. Nevertheless, as he is well aware himself, it is virtually impossible to verify this optimistic assumption.

²⁶ There is at this point no need to discuss in detail the argument between McNamara and others over dating Targumic literature. The Targum Psalms is generally agreed to be of a comparatively late origin. For a critical discussion of McNamara's *New Testament and the Palestinian Targum* see York, "Dating", 57-62 as well as Bowker, *Targum*, 17-20.

²⁷ Roberts, *Text*, 209 points to various conflated readings which may point to the use of older material.

²⁸ This is consistent with what we know about the Targum on the Psalms in general (Bacher, "Targum", 62). Targum Psalms and Targum Job vary more from MT than most other Targums.

with Ps 68.18.²⁹ Unfortunately nothing can be inferred from this source for the wording used in Ephesians. However, the focus on leading captives captive in the War Scroll alerts us to the possibility that the inclusion of the same theme in Eph 4.8 may have been more deliberate than is usually thought.³⁰

Rabbinic Parallels

In the rabbinic corpus we note eight significant occurrences of Ps 68.18.³¹ The common ground shared by these texts is the application of the Psalm to the giving of the Torah to Moses. However, the much later Targums Psalms is the only text to exercise the freedom to substitute the verb *give* for *receive*. Two of the eight texts mentioned, Midrash Psalms and Aboth Rabbi Nathan, are interested in the giving of the Torah to the people.

Aboth and Midrash Psalms imply that the receiving of the Torah by Moses and the giving of the Torah to the people are two separate events. In Aboth the main thrust lies in the tension between the glory of having received the Torah and Moses' reluctance to pass it on to the people who worshipped the golden calf. In contrast to the Targum, *giving* is not compatible with *receiving*.

Midrash Psalms reads the aspect of giving into the Psalm text: the Torah is given for men. This interpretation of the Hebrew preposition

²⁹ General comments on this Psalm have been found in Cave one and have subsequently been published (Barthelemy and Milik, *Discoveries* I, 81f).

³⁰ This combines with the observation that in the quotation the verb expressing ascension was changed to a participle thus placing the weight of the quotation on leading captives captive and giving gifts (cf Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 179).

³¹ I am here relying on the indices of the standard editions by Braude, *Midrash*, Epstein, *Talmud* and Freedman, *Rabbah*. Harris, "Descent", 11-29 discusses other texts which fail to contribute significantly to the discussion. The eight texts to be considered briefly can be described as follows: MidrPs 22.19 [95^a] and Shab 16.15 [33^c] provide close parallels to TrSoph 16.10. This in effect reduces the number of texts to six.

AbothRN 2.2 (18^b): "What virtue is there in man born of woman that he has ascended on high, as it is stated; thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts?" (Cohen, *Tractates* I, 21); TrSoph 16.10: "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for the sake of man..." (Cohen, 292); MidrPs 68.11 [160^a]: "Thou hast gone up on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for man." (Braude, *Midrash*, 545); Shab 88^b: "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast taken spoils; thou hast received gifts on account of man; as a recompense for their calling thee man." (Epstein, *Talmud*, 423); Tan 115^a: "You have led captive the Torah which was in my heart. Therefore you have led captive what was inside me. You have received gifts." (translated from SB, 598); ExR 28.1: "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive. Thou hast received gifts among man." (Freedman, *Rabbah* II, 331).

א is not yet detectable in the earlier Aboth. Sopher and Exodus Rabbah understand א causally and relate ארץ to Abraham. Moses received the Torah because of, or for the sake of, Abraham. ארץ is not understood collectively and any interest in giving and in the ultimate recipients of the Torah is lacking. This could either be because the authors/redactors were not primarily interested in the passing on of the Torah itself, or because the tradition had not yet been highly developed.

Shabbat and Ta'annith both focus entirely on Moses' receiving of the Torah. Shabbat takes the preposition א causally and sees in ארץ a reference to Moses who was despised by the angels for being a human being. Ta'annith takes the preposition as "referring to". The מצוות are seen to be the commandments regarding man's impurity.

This survey shows that the aspect of giving was far from prevalent in the rabbinic understanding of Ps 68.18. The emphasis is mostly on the receiving of the Torah by Moses. Targum Psalms therefore cannot simply be called 'rabbinic'. Nevertheless, the rabbinic tendency to interpret the Psalm somewhat more freely may have influenced the Targumic rendering.

The texts surveyed, unlike Ephesians, generally apply the Psalm to Moses. Ephesians at this point is hardly "dependent" on rabbinic tendencies. However, most rabbinic texts share the tendency to interpret at least implicitly the Hebrew לְקַח as being for men. Here receiving is seen as implying giving. In view of the rabbinic data we may ask: was the author of Ephesians aware of such reasoning? Indeed Jub 6.17-19—late second century BC—suggests that he was.

By the late second century BC the transformation of Pentecost from a harvest festival to a Law-giving commemoration was in progress, if not complete.³² From Meg 31^a we know that Ps 68 was one of the two main Psalms read out on this occasion.³³ In conjunction with the information from Jubilees, we can establish a line of tradition which is reflected in the later rabbinic traditions and runs through the first century AD. In view of the prevalence of this

³² The Qumran community followed the same calendar (Cf 1QS 1.7-2.19). Wintermut, "Jubilees", 44-46 discusses the kinship between Qumran and Jubilees and between Jubilees and the works by the Pharisees "who also had roots in the Hasidic movement of the Maccabean age." He concludes that probably "the boundaries between Pharisees and Essenes were not as sharply drawn as they were a hundred years earlier." Cf also Porter, "Descent", 539f.

³³ The other text read was Ps 29. Whether the synagogue liturgy attested in Megillah was in place during the time of the writing of Ephesians is not entirely certain, but likely in view of the early transition of Pentecost from a harvest festival to a Torah commemoration. Cf also Noack, "Day", 73-95.

Psalm in first century Jewish Pentecost celebrations we can assume that it was widely known among religious Jews at the time.³⁴ This makes the striking divergence of Eph 4.8 all the more remarkable. Could Knox be right when he claims that the author of Ephesians may have endeavoured to take away the Psalm from Judaism?³⁵ It is at any rate possible that Eph 4.8—or the text quoted there—alludes polemically to the most prevalent Jewish understanding and application of the Psalm. The irony of such a procedure would undoubtedly lie in the fact that the change from *receive* to *give* is in principle nothing but the logical extension of the rabbinic tendency to interpret אֶת as for men, that is, gifts *received for men*. In this, Ephesians would resemble the Targum, the difference being that the former imitates this tendency polemically by substituting Christ for the Torah, whereas the latter endorses and radicalises the rabbinic assumption with a good degree of approval.

A further similarity between the Targum and Ephesians which underscores such an understanding is the fact that, albeit with different objectives, both went as far as replacing the original verb with its opposite. The widespread assumption that Eph 4.8 should be seen as reflecting the same Jewish exegetical tradition as the TgPs 68 is misleading. While TgPs 68 represents a further step in the rabbinic tendency to interpret receiving as receiving for men, Eph 4.8 probably alludes to, rather than being derived from, the rabbinic interpretative tradition which eventually led to TgPs 68. Consequently attempts to explain Eph 4 on the basis of the Targum Psalms are misguided; other avenues need to be explored.

THE EVIDENCE OF PS 68.18

One proposal which merits consideration argues that Eph 4.8 faithfully reflects the thrust of the entire Psalm, rather than reiterating its exact wording. This attractive proposal is based on the understanding that the Psalm is primarily about God sharing the spoils of victory with his people.³⁶ In order to test this suggestion, Ps 68 itself needs to be examined, paying particular attention to the role

³⁴ In addition to the synagogue liturgy one may point to the annual covenant renewal ceremony in the Qumran community at Pentecost (1QS 1.7-2.19).

³⁵ Knox, *Church*, 223. There is a suggestion that the Psalm also played a major role in the formation of the early testimony of the messiah's resurrection and function in Acts 2.33 (cf Lindars, *Apologetic*, 44,53f and Dupont, "Ascension", 219ff). However, the support for this proposal is rather slim.

³⁶ Penner, "Enthronement", 99.

of v18. It will emerge that Penner's suggestion is not without serious defects. At the same time this examination will throw into sharp relief the Jewish understanding and use of this Psalm during the annual Pentecost festival. When focusing on the use of Ps 68.18 in Eph 4 itself, it will become clear that this divergence may provide us with a significant interpretative clue.

The Historical Occasion of Ps 68

The historical setting of the Psalm has been subject to some debate.³⁷ Possibilities include: the removal of the Ark to Zion in David's time (2 Sam 6); an unspecified victory by David (2 Sam 8 or 11-12); God's victories in general; the placing of the Ark in Solomon's temple; Israel's victory over Moab (2 Kgs 3); the restricting of the Assyrians at the time of Hezekiah; the consecration of the restoration Temple; the return from captivity, and the time of the Maccabean wars. In view of this debate, "you" in v18 could denote: Moses' ascent to Mt Sinai (Exod 19); David's receiving of high honour (2 Sam 7); the Ark's ascent to Mt Zion (2 Sam 6), or God's ascent to heaven.³⁸

My suggestion is to recognise a number of allusions in this Psalm to Barak's battle and Deborah's song in Jdg 4 and 5.³⁹ Quite possibly v17a ("many chariots") hints at Jdg 4.13. The phrase שָׁשִׁיָּהּ שָׁבִי in v18 was almost certainly inspired by Jdg 5.12, where the same root is employed twice for the command to Barak to take captive Sisera and his army (Jdg 4.14). That the Psalmist has the time of Deborah in

³⁷ Gunkel refused to see historical references in Ps 68 and consequently saw the Psalm as an eschatological prophecy (Gunkel, *Psalmen*, 283ff). Kraus points to eschatological and historical elements (Kraus, *Psalmen* II, 630) and concludes in view of significant parallels with the Song of Deborah in Jdg 5 that "Ps 68 contains cultic elements and traditions from the Israelite sanctuary in Mt. Tabor" (ibid, 632. See also Kraus, "Kulttraditionen", 178ff and Mowinckel, *Psalmstudien* II, 172. For a survey of opinions see also Iwry, "Notes", 161-5). We shall see that there are also parallels with Jdg 4. Whereas Kraus argues that the Song of Deborah does not suffice to account for the entire Psalm, I shall argue that it will at least provide us with the main key to understanding the part relevant for the purpose of the present study.

³⁸ See Smith, "Use", 185 categorises the main proposals for the Psalm's *Sitz im Leben* as follows: (1) eschatological vision of hope; (2) a post-battle military victory song (the most popular answer given by scholars); (3) an enthronement festival and (4) a prophecy of Christ (Church Fathers).

³⁹ Compare the following pairs: v7/Jdg 4.14; v8/Jdg 5.4f; v13/Jdg 5.16,19; v17/Jdg 5.12; v21/Jdg 5.26; v27/Jdg 4.10 and 5.18. Further possible allusions are vv1-4/Jdg 5.31; v14/Jdg 9.48 (the only two occurrences of Mt Zalmon in the OT Scriptures - see Grill, "Salmon", 432-5); v22/Jdg 5.3.

mind seems clear from the striking verbal parallels between vv8f and Jdg 4.14 and 5.4f.⁴⁰ The verses that follow show that the Psalmist expects Israel to have carried away booty on that occasion.⁴¹ V18 alludes to God's leading of Barak's army onto Mt. Tabor⁴² from where it attacked, defeated and led captive Sisera's army and carried away booty.⁴³ The ascension is to be taken literally,⁴⁴ although, in the light of v16, there may be overtones of God's mighty ascension to his throne of glory.⁴⁵

The Structural Role of v18

Despite the prevalent view that, in its canonical form, this Psalm cannot be regarded as a unified hymn, Penner attempted to argue for its unity.⁴⁶ He provides a structural outline which consists mainly of

⁴⁰ Ps 68.12b and 13b may well have been influenced by the combination of silver and booty in Jdg 5.19. The line separating the two clearly echoes Jdg 5.16. V12a can similarly be taken as a poetic rendering of Jdg 5.19ab.

⁴¹ In Jubilees the emphasis is more on the fact that Sisera did not carry away booty. The Psalm, in contrast, is more interested in the positive aspect of a military victory under God's leadership.

⁴² Usually *on high* is thought to point either Mt. Zion or to Mt. Sinai (Dahood, *Psalms*, 143). Dahood favours Mt. Sinai because of the reference to Sinai in v17 and because of Ps 47.6. However, Ps 47 does not actually mention Mt. Sinai. To make matters more difficult, the MT version of Ps 68.17b as it stands is hardly intelligible (see Kraus, *Psalmen* II, 627f). In view of the recurring battle theme alluding to Deborah and Barak's fight against Sisera I would suggest as the most likely option for v17 Mt. Tabor.

⁴³ Contra Smith, "Use", 185 who argues for a connection between Ps 68.18 and Num 8.19 and 18.6-9 and thus asserts that the military language of the Psalm "should not be taken too literally". Smith ignores the many historical references combined with the almost omnipresent motif of God's/Israel's enemies perishing.

⁴⁴ For a literal use of מָרַם see Prov 9.3.

⁴⁵ There is also the suggestion that this Psalm alludes to the giving of the Levites (Num 8) and that the author of Ephesians took up this allusion to set the giving of church leaders (Eph 4) in analogy to it. The argument could be supported by pointing to the quotation of Num 10.35 in Ps 68.1 and the possible, although unlikely, echo of Num 10.36 in v18. On this view the military interpretation is discounted. This is a major weakness as there is a definite military thrust in vv2,11f,14,17f,21,23,30. Also, why does Ephesians not allude to Numbers directly rather than fully reversing the thrust of the verb? If the same question is asked about the "military" interpretation favoured in the present study, the answer is that Ephesians was interested precisely in the military tone of Ps 68.17. Moreover, the links with Jdg 4 and 5 proved to be closer than those with Numbers. In any case, while suggesting a possible motif, the Numbers option fails to account for the change in wording in Ephesians. Lastly, there is little if any connection between the giving of Levites in Num 8 and the significance of the Ark at the end of ch 10 which is alluded to in Ps 68.1,17.

⁴⁶ Penner, "Enthronement", 90ff.

a chiasm built around v18, the verse apparently quoted or misquoted in Eph 4. However, the following criticisms must be made. Penner's proposed chiasm depends among other things on the chiasmic correspondence of v17 and vv19f. But this is as problematic as his division of v15 into the three parts. It appears that Penner, in order to arrive at a structure which centres topically around v18, atomises too rigidly, especially in the middle section of the Psalm. This happens at the expense of vv19-21, a section of confident praise which in effect takes up a thread that runs throughout the entire Psalm (vv3f,19-21,26,29ff). Yet there are a number of positive pointers in Penner's argument which can be modified fruitfully. I would suggest the following outline:

- A1 1-4 praise: God's enemies perish - the righteous rejoice
- B1 5-10 God's saving intervention in the past
- C1 11-14 praise and victory celebration
- D1 15-18 choice of and ascension on the mountain
- E 19-20 praise for the future: God provides
- D' 21-23 subjection of the enemies' mountain
- C' 24-27 praise and victory procession to the sanctuary
- B' 28-31 plea for God's saving intervention once more
- A' 32-35 Praise: God's glorious power upholds his people

In contrast to Penner I would hold that v18 is not the focal point of the Psalm and would question his explanation that Ephesians quoted v18 because of its structural significance.⁴⁷ The case for seeing vv19f as the focal point is considerably stronger.⁴⁸ It appears that Penner's proposal, along with the 'Targumic approach' discussed earlier, fails to provide a satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon encountered in Eph 4.8. Clearly, therefore, a new appraisal of this verse is justified. Any satisfactory explanation must take account of the shift in understanding and application of Ps 68 in the first two centuries BC as compared with its original setting and thrust.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 99.

⁴⁸ (1) V19 elaborates on the very topic which permeates the entire Psalm. (2) The phrase *בְּרֹדֶף אֲדִינִי* (cf v35) functions as a marker emphasising the centrality of the theme of vv19f. (3) If the musical sign *סֶלָה* between v19 and v20 was placed by the Psalmist himself, this would enhance the significance of these verses. (4) Vv19f form a unity from the point of view of metrical coherence [2:2;2:2 / 2:2;2:2]—see Kraus, *Psalmen* II, 629 and Oesterley, *Psalms*, 325. (5) V19 provides the link between past and future within the Psalm. (6) This linking role is further undergirded by the plural nouns *לְמוֹשָׁעוֹת* and *הוֹצָאֹת* which sum up God's repeated acts of salvation.

PSALM 68.18 AND EPHESIANS 4.8-10

One of the striking features of the quotation in Eph 4.8 is the somewhat enigmatic introductory formula διὸ λέγει. Whereas the plain meaning of this phrase is obvious enough, the issue is complicated by the grave deviation in wording from the OT text. Surely the presence of the formula indicates the author's confidence in making the quotation. What is less certain is whether the alleged misquotation should be attributed to a mistake or to deliberate adaptation. It is equally uncertain who is responsible for the alteration. Was our author dependent on a text form which had already substituted giving for taking? Numerous explanations of this intriguing phenomenon have been offered. We shall see that none of them can be regarded as entirely satisfactory. After a survey of these proposals we must consider afresh the introductory formula, the quotation itself and the appended exposition. What role is played by the underlying OT text? This chapter offers an explanation which takes on board insights of earlier studies and attempts to combine these with a new line of argument.

Explanations Offered in the Past

It is well known that scholars frequently apply terminology such as *midrash* or *midrash pesher* to the use of OT material in the New Testament. It seems that the temptation to do so is proportional to the degree of extravagance displayed by the author's appropriation of OT material. Little wonder that such terminology should be employed by commentators in the present case.⁴⁹ There may be some merit in this description, but it must not cloud the fact that the exposition offered in vv9f appears to be restricted to the phrase ἀναβὰς εἰς ὕψος and does not account for or develop further the problematic term ἔδωκεν.

As we saw, the re-wording of this well-known text goes significantly beyond what we found in the contemporary comparative material. By this I do not refer primarily to the christological exposition of the text in Ephesians—although that is clearly a major contribution by the author—but to the simple fact that, for whatever reason, Eph 4.8 preserves a version which decisively reverses the wording of the original text. From this one might infer that the formal introduction reflects the writer's desire to draw attention to the change in wording. This would hold true even if the change in wording had to be ascribed to someone other than the author, an

⁴⁹ Eg Lindars, *Apologetic*, 53; Harris, "Descent", 197 and Ellis, "Use", 144.

issue to be discussed below. This argument could be avoided by showing that the decisive term itself, ἔδωκεν, actually reflects an interpretation of the Psalm. Indeed, a number of scholars have taken up precisely this line of argument.

The direction of such reasoning is indicated by Merklein. He argues that it would be "understandable... if the rabbinic texts could be seen to reflect a general tendency even outside the midrashic interpretation which relates the text to Moses and the Torah" and which understood the verb *take* "in the sense of taking for, ie giving".⁵⁰ According to this view, *leading captives captive* and *taking gifts among men* "could easily be understood as a denoting a continuous line of reasoning, as YHWH's taking took place for the benefit of Israel."⁵¹ The problem with such language is that it does little to solve the heart of the problem: why would an author who shows throughout the epistle evidence of a thorough acquaintance with the Jewish Scriptures submit to 'tendency' to the point of turning the well-known text of the original Psalm virtually on its head?⁵² It would have been more convenient and certainly safer to omit the quotation altogether or to quote instead the last verse of the same Psalm—"The God of Israel gives power and strength to his people"—which would in any case have been far more suitable in the context of Eph 4.11ff. To argue, as Merklein does, that the step from λαμβάνειν to διδόναι was not a big one, is to sidestep rather than to solve the problem.

A further, though similar, attempt to resolve the issue is based on an assumption about Ps 68 which has been expressed by Ellis,⁵³ taken on board by Kidner,⁵⁴ and developed more recently by Penner.⁵⁵ Again it is assumed that God, having received gifts among men, shared the benefits of the conquest with his people. This is thought to be evident from Ps 68.19ff. Ephesians, it is further argued, far from contradicting the Psalm, summarises it by quoting its climactic

⁵⁰ Merklein, *Amt*, 66.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Kirby, *Pentecost* points out that there may be further evidence of the author's knowledge of the Psalm in ch 2.2,22. Those outside the church are called sons of disobedience, while those within are termed a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. The continuation of v18 in the LXX runs "even among the disobedient that the Lord may dwell among them." Lock, *Ephesians*, finds reminiscences of Ps 68 in 2.22 and 3.17 (cf Ps 68.16); 1.18 (cf v9); 2.7 (cf v10); 3.16 and 6.10 (vv20,35) and 5.19 (cf vv4,32).

⁵³ Ellis, "Use", 138f and 144.

⁵⁴ Kidner, *Psalms 1-72*, 242.

⁵⁵ Penner, "Enthronement", 92 and 99.

verse.⁵⁶ This would indeed be a convenient solution, were it not for the obvious deficiency of this suggestion that Ephesians does not quote Ps 68.19f, that is the Psalm's climax, but v18. Why did the author of Ephesians not quote vv19f if indeed he had intended to sum up the thrust of this Psalm? Surely the answer has to be that the writer was interested in the keyword *giving* (cf Eph 4.7), not in a summary of the Psalm (vv19f).⁵⁷

The solution proposed by Penner *et al* must in the final analysis be rejected. Ps 68.18 appears to be rather unsuitable for summarising the central message of the Psalm. Nor does this verse represent the Psalm's climax. An obvious candidate for quotation would have been v35. This would have had the added benefit of combining summary with giving prominence to the theme of giving. It appears, then, that the argument which regards the quotation in v8 as a summary of the Psalm is fallacious. Nor would we be well advised to regard the keyword association around *giving* as the sole reason for the quotation in Eph 4.8. A more promising avenue is called for.

The Formula, Wording and Provenance of the Quotation

The obvious starting point for this investigation is the formula which introduces the quotation. Within the NT the formula διὸ λέγει occurs four times. Two of these occurrences fall within Eph (4.8; 5.14). The other two instances (Heb 3.7 and Jam 4.6) are unfortunately not very helpful for our purposes.⁵⁸ Nor is there any direct evidence to suggest that the reader should supply a subject, such as "scripture", for the verb. It is probably wiser not to press the verb in this way as a *terminus technicus*. In Josephus the formula

⁵⁶ Ibid, 98f.

⁵⁷ Far from expressing any result of having taken gifts among men, vv19f take up the theme of praise for God's salvific action throughout the history of his people. Indeed this topic features already in vv1-4 and 11-14, reappears in vv24-27, and concludes the Psalm in vv32-35. If the author of Ephesians had intended to summarise the Psalm, while at the same time giving prominence to the idea of giving, the obvious verse to quote or allude to would have been the concluding v35. Even there, however, there is not a hint that God's act of giving strength was in any way related to his having received gifts among men (cf v28).

⁵⁸ Contra Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 206; Schlier, *Epheser*, 191 and Robinson, *Ephesians*, 179. Strictly speaking, διὸ in Heb 3.7 is not connected directly with λέγειν at all. Instead it introduces an entire paragraph of admonition, part of which is formed by the OT quotation. A further difference to Ephesians consists of the fact that Heb specifies the subject of λέγειν. In Jam 4.6 the formula may well reinforce the previous statement ἡ γραφή λέγει (v5). Possibly v6bc forms the quotation which was announced in v5 and which has been delayed by the statement between the two introductory formulae.

does not appear at all. Philo uses it repeatedly of Scripture,⁵⁹ although sometimes he employs the formula to echo the general gist of a Scriptural passage, rather than to introduce a quotation.⁶⁰ Astonishingly διὸ λέγει appears only three times in our available pre-Christian Greek literature.⁶¹ Owing to this limited evidence, the search for clues has to focus on Ephesians itself.

An important recognition is that διὸ repeatedly serves in this letter to move the discussion on from theological proposition to practical relevance. This is certainly the case in ch 2.11ff which shows the sociological implications of a theological truth asserted in vv8-10. Ch 3.13 applies the lesson of the preceding verses to Paul's tribulations. Again, ch 4.25ff swiftly applies in rather practical terms what it means to "put on the new man..." (vv20-24). Ch 5.14 shows that the reverse may be true as well; here the phrase introduces a piece of theological and probably traditional material which summarises the underlying message of the preceding verses. Irrespective of direction—from theological proposition to application or from exhortation to theological summary—we can conclude that in Ephesians διὸ firmly links the phrase that it introduces with what precedes. In the present instance this means that the quoted text of v8 probably serves to sum up the christological and ecclesiological message of v7. In other words, v7 has to play a vital part in interpreting v8.

Given the author's knowledgeable use of OT material elsewhere (1.20-3; 2.13-7; 4.25f; 5.31; 6.2f and 14-17), why is it precisely this (mis?)quotation and the equally mysterious three-line quotation in ch 5.14b⁶² which are introduced formally? The severity of his apparent mistake is increased by the observation, made above, that the Psalm was in all likelihood widely known in first century Palestinian Judaism.⁶³ While the introductory formula clearly prepared for the subsequent elaboration on the quoted text,⁶⁴ this alone would fail to

⁵⁹ *All Int* III, 172, 180; *Conf Tong*, 154; 182; *Husb*, 100; *Drunk*, 138; 146; 166; *Heir*, 58; 233; *Names*, 17; *Poster*, 96; 127; *Abr*, 80; *Dreams* II, 280; *Flight*, 159; *Sacr*, 79.

⁶⁰ *Noah*, 19. For a somewhat similar instance in Paul, although with a different introductory formula, see Gal 4.22 and 2 Cor 4.6.

⁶¹ For obtaining this information the *Ibycus/Thesaurus Linguae Graece* computer system was used.

⁶² Cf my discussion in the following chapter.

⁶³ Mitton's statement that the Psalm was one of the less popular ones of the Jewish religion (*Ephesians*, 146) is rather surprising in view of the evidence adduced above.

⁶⁴ Arnold rightly complains that NT scholars have ignored the contextual suitability of the phrase ἡχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν (Ps 68.18) for the message

account adequately for the anomaly of the quoted text if the author's *Vorlage* had indeed been Ps 68.18 itself, rather than, say, a Christian emendation of it.

Interestingly the altered wording, while presupposed by the discussion that follows (vv11ff), appears not to be the object of the ensuing exposition (vv9f). It is simply presupposed. This is an unusual feature which calls for a more far-reaching explanation than that which simply describes vv9f as a midrashic exposition of Ps 68.18. The crucial observation here is that the blatant and obvious change in wording which reverses the thrust of the original verse, clearly deviates from rabbinic quotations or allusions to this OT verse. The changed wording is virtually ignored in the exposition offered in vv9f. A better explanation may therefore be that the author genuinely quoted the text in a form in which it was known to him as well as to his intended audience.

I have already rejected the argument that the quoted text itself incorporates some sort of exposition of Ps 68. It appears to be far better to accept the tension between *Vorlage* and NT quotation. This does mean, however, that we need to enquire who is responsible for the alteration. Along with other commentators I shall argue below that Eph 5.14b preserves an early Christian three-liner which the author took over to sum up his own christological/ecclesiological argument. Given the use of the same introductory formula in that instance, one wonders whether we should assume a similar scenario for ch 4.8.

Undoubtedly the formal introduction is meant to indicate that the quoted text is not the writer's own creation. There may be a possibility that the text was taken directly from Scripture and altered by the NT author, but nowhere else in the letter does he introduce OT material formally as a quotation let alone by διὸ λέγει. Another possibility is that he received the quoted text in its present form, but not directly from Scripture.⁶⁵ Having ruled out as unsatisfactory the

of Christ's superiority over the evil powers (*Powers*, 133). Among the very few commentators to pay any attention to the phrase itself is Merklein, *Amt*, 67. It is also significant to note that the change to the participle ἀναβάς puts the weight precisely on the phrase under discussion. At the same time it would appear that knowledge of the Psalm could only be presupposed for Jewish readers. This may indicate that at this point it is such readers that the author has in mind.

⁶⁵ An indication in this direction may be that vv11ff appear to form a continuation of what is said in v7. In other words, vv8-10 could be described as what is formally a digression, albeit a vital one—cf the discussion of *dio* above. A similar digression is found in ch 5.31f, the difference being, of course, that ch 4.8 is introduced formally as a quotation.

view which posits a pre-Targumic—and therefore Jewish—strand which provided the author's *Vorlage*, the most plausible alternative may well be the assumption that v8 preserves an early Christian adaptation of Ps 68.18.⁶⁶ If so, the writer's original contribution may have consisted primarily in the exposition which he appended to this emended early Christian text.

It is easy to see how the adapted version of Ps 68.18 taken over in v8 may have been formulated in direct contrast to the Jewish use of this Psalm⁶⁷ during annual Torah commemorations. Such Torah celebrations formed an essential part of first century Jewish Pentecost festivities.⁶⁸ Whereas Ps 68 played a significant role in Jewish Pentecost, the deliberately adapted version preserved in Eph 4.8 could have been 'the Christian answer', that is, it will have played an equally significant role in Christian Pentecost. This would explain both the alteration in wording and the introductory formula which supports the assumption that the author quoted from a source other than the OT, albeit one which he expected his audience to be aware of.

When reviewing the use and significance of Ps 68 in extra-Biblical literature, we saw that from a Jewish point of view the change of wording in Eph 4.8 looks more like a parody on rabbinic appropriations of the Psalm than an authoritative quotation of Scripture followed by exposition. It does not suffice to explain the radical change in wording and the exposition that follows as a midrashic interpretation of Scripture. Although it may be quite proper to apply midrash terminology to vv9f, the strong possibility

⁶⁶ Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 180 points out briefly that "man kann sich eine urchristliche, die jüdische Tradition aufnehmende Textgestalt und Interpretation vorstellen, die dem Eph-Autor bekannt war." The quoted text differs not only in regard to the main verb, but also in that it followed the Vaticanus text of LXX in substituting a participle (ἀναβάζ) for a finite verb. This enabled the change from the second person to the third person singular in the rest of the quotation (Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 242). Significantly, this also led to a grammatical correspondence between the two main statements. The sequence participle verb verb reminds one of the quotation in ch 5.14b. To be sure, the grammatical sequence of the latter is different (imperative + imperative + future tense verb) but both pieces are similarly rhythmical. In both cases this is achieved by retaining the verbs at the beginning of the three lines. For a fuller discussion of the criteria employed for detecting traditional material cf chapter six below.

⁶⁷ Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 180 is right in maintaining that a „direkte Übernahme jener jüdischen Auslegungstradition durch Eph ist allerdings unwahrscheinlich“.

⁶⁸ A detailed discussion will follow under the sub-section "Ascent-Descent Theme".

must be borne in mind that what is being interpreted is not strictly speaking Scripture,⁶⁹ but a polemical early Christian adaptation and response to the Jewish use of this Psalm. Such polemic, to be sure, would not have been directed against Scripture, but against what was perceived to be a misuse of it. Whereas Jewish theology *reinterpreted* the Psalm verse as referring to the giving of the Torah to Moses, the version that we encounter in Ephesians went as far as *replacing* the main verb by its exact opposite in order to apply it to Christ. Methodologically this may not be dissimilar; it is certainly far more radical. If the suggestion of an early Christian *Vorlage* for Eph 4.8 is valid, the midrash of vv9f relates not directly to Ps 68, but to an early Christian polemic, formulated in response to what was perceived to be a Jewish misuse of Ps 68.18.⁷⁰

The thesis offered here can now be compared with other proposed solutions. Classifications of the use of Eph 4.8 have varied from *midrash pesher*⁷¹ to argument by inference,⁷² remoulding of thought,⁷³ messianic reinterpretation,⁷⁴ unintentional *ex suis* quotation,⁷⁵ and Christianising exegesis.⁷⁶ These views are usually based on the interpretative elaboration which follows the quotation. The very presence of such interpretative comments led numerous scholars to assume automatically that the quotation in v8 was regarded by the NT author as OT Scripture. However, if the proposal of this chapter is valid, vv9f provide a midrashic exposition of a Christian tradition which should, strictly speaking, no longer be identified with Ps 68.18.⁷⁷ Given the introductory formula, this

⁶⁹ Already Stoeckhardt, *Ephesians*, 191 suggested that Ephesians does not interpret Ps 68. Stoeckhardt did not take this insight much further.

⁷⁰ Even if the assumption of a mediating layer between Ps 68.18 and Eph 4.8 were shown to be incorrect, the essence of the present argument could be retained. The difference would of course be that the deliberate and polemical nature of the alteration in the wording of the Psalm would have to be ascribed to the author of Ephesians himself. One would then have reason to compare Eph 4.8-10 with undisputedly Pauline texts such as 1 Cor 10.4; Gal 3.19f; 4.21ff; Rom 10.5-8 which could be argued to display a similarly polemical use of Scripture.

⁷¹ Lincoln, "Use", 19; Lindars, *Apologetic*, 53 and possibly Schlier, *Epheser*, 190.

⁷² Longenecker, *Exegesis*, 125.

⁷³ Smith, "Use", 189.

⁷⁴ Schmid, *Epheser*, 320.

⁷⁵ Stoeckhardt, *Ephesians*, 193f.

⁷⁶ Caird, *Descent*, 543.

⁷⁷ To distinguish between Ps 68 and the text quoted in Eph 4.8 in this way is evidently not to deny any link between the two. Rather, it is to recognise that the quoted text is more concerned with emulating polemically the common Jewish use of this Psalm than with interpreting the latter. It is also to recognise that this particular

adaptation is likely to have been in circulation before our author employed it in his letter. Hence we must effectively distinguish between three layers rather than two:

Ps 68.18 (a Jewish Psalm)

the wording preserved in Eph 4.8 as evidence of a Christian tradition
modelled in response to the use of Ps 68 as part of Jewish Pentecost
the appropriation and exposition of the latter in Eph 4.8-10

It is necessary to examine the theological rationale behind the change in wording and the author's appropriation of the adapted text.

Torah and Christ - the Theological Background of Eph 4.8

To understand the religious background presupposed by Eph 4.8 we need to look back briefly to the striking christologically motivated Torah polemic of ch 2.13ff. The strong language employed by the author indicates a theological need which he felt he had to address. The question of the relationship between Christ and Torah which had been clarified in ch 2 to some extent forms the background of ch 4 also. Whereas Judaism perceived the Torah to be God's gift *per se*, the writer's Christian vantage point necessitates that God's gift *per se* is Christ⁷⁸ (cf also ch 1.22). In fact, the writer seems to argue, Christ himself becomes a giver of gifts to God's (new) people. Whereas the Torah may have been God's gift for the people of Israel (ch 2.11ff), Christ's gifts are for the trans-ethnic new people of God (cf 2.15). The old divisions have disappeared, as has the Torah (2.14). To emphasise this point, the author quoted and elaborated on a commonly known Christian adaptation of Ps 68.18 which by implication placed Christ above the Torah. The Jewish Pentecostal liturgy which employed Ps 68.18 to celebrate the giving of the Torah had been replaced in Christian circles. Christian Pentecostal celebrations probably emulated, but also adapted, the Jewish use of Ps 68 as a vital reading during Jewish Pentecost.⁷⁹

Christian response, that is the quoted text, may well have been widespread in Pauline circles before the writing of this letter.

⁷⁸ Cf Käsemann, "Ministry", 74 who puts it like this: "...the Giver is not to be separated from his gift but is really present in it".

⁷⁹ For bibliographical details of scholars who suggest that Ps 68.18 also influenced Acts 2.33 see Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 244.

The resulting early Christian emendation of Ps 68.18 is in all probability both deliberate and polemical.⁸⁰ It imitates contemporary Jewish tendencies to apply the verse to the giving of the Torah by reinterpreting it drastically. While the Psalm originally alluded to Israel's military victory under Deborah, it had gradually been turned into a celebration of the Mt. Sinai event. This development which necessitated a radical reinterpretation of v18⁸¹ is likely to have paralleled the change of the Jewish Pentecost away from a harvest festival to a commemoration of the Torah. There is little doubt that both our author's postulated Christian *Vorlage* as well as he himself disagreed with this Torah-centred reinterpretation.⁸²

Despite not condoning this Jewish understanding of Ps 68.18, early Christianity seized the rhetorical opportunity of emulating and even polemically exaggerating the Jewish reinterpretation of this verse to the point of substituting the main verb by its exact opposite.⁸³ Essentially this was little more than the logical extension of interpreting the "receiving" of spoils by YHWH as the "giving" of the Torah to Moses, a feature well attested in the rabbinic sources we examined. The decisive difference was, of course, that it is now Christ rather than Moses who becomes the focal point. Put simply, the events reported in Acts 2 replace those at the centre of the Book of Jubilees, that is Jewish Pentecost. Whereas Jubilees is concerned with the various covenants of Israel, Ephesians regards the "covenant of promise" (Eph 2.12) as having been fulfilled when "he came and announced peace" (v17). What was said explicitly in ch 2 is reiterated by way of implication and with the help of early Christian polemic in ch 4.8: Christ is superior to the Torah.

To the interpretation offered here it might be objected that the immediate co-text of Eph 4.8 does not mention the Torah. However, in the light of the strongly worded section on the role of the Law in ch 2.11-22 especially in relation to the ethnic question, it would be fallacious to ignore this backdrop. What is admittedly only implicit

⁸⁰ This can be held regardless of whether the emendation is the author's own work, or whether he is here indeed following an early Christian polemical adaptation of this verse, as argued in this chapter.

⁸¹ YHWH's ascension is replaced by that of Moses and the receiving of gifts became interpreted as "receiving in order to give [the Torah]".

⁸² The mountain mentioned in Ps 68 is not Mt Sinai (v15).

⁸³ The possibility of a polemical use of Ps 68.18 is also recognised by Kirby, *Pentecost*. Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 180 cautions against seeing vv8-10 as a polemic against Moses. But he can imagine an early Christian tradition which mediated between the role of Ps 68.18 in Judaism and the midrash and interpretation offered in Eph 4.8-10.

in ch 4.8ff has no doubt an explicit message: whereas the Torah is described in various Jewish texts as having resided with God in heaven,⁸⁴ according to this writer it is Christ who has ascended ὑπεράνω παντῶν τῶν οὐρανῶν, ἵνα πληρώσῃ τὰ πάντα (v10) and who is seated next to the Father (1.20).⁸⁵ The previously hidden wisdom and plan of God (3.9) have now been revealed in Christ. Ch 3.9 sounds not unlike Shab 88b which portrays the angels who, during Moses' ascension in order to receive the Torah, ask God whether he really wanted to give to Moses what had been with God since creation. It seems that the view reflected in this tradition⁸⁶ justifies regarding even Eph 3.8-12 as a deliberate application to Christ of what had in Judaism frequently been ascribed to the Torah.⁸⁷ Through Christ everyone may "approach in freedom and confidence" (3.12).

We conclude that the emphasis on the superiority of Christ is a constant subtheme in chs 2 and 3. Even in ch 4 the author returns from the theme of oneness (vv1-6) to the central position held by Christ (v7), thus setting the scene for the quotation (v8), exposition (vv9f) and specific application (vv11ff).

THE MIDRASH WHICH FOLLOWS THE QUOTATION

The exposition of vv9f features two main themes, the ascent-descent motif and the fullness theme. It must be established how these themes are related to the quotation. We may take as our starting point the suggestion by Schnackenburg⁸⁸ that vv9f form a christological

⁸⁴ Shab 88b; MidrPs 8.5.2.

⁸⁵ Christ's superiority is thus not only based on the fact that he ascended and descended—through the Spirit; cf Caird, "Descent", 1535-45—but also on the fact that his abode is ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις. For the ascent motif in ch 1 see my discussion in chapter 2.

⁸⁶ Needless to say the customary proviso applies that the dating of the tradition preserved in Shabbat is highly uncertain.

⁸⁷ See for instance Ben Sira 24-25; Wis 6.18; Bar 3.29-32, 36ff and 1 Enoch 42.1f (cf Dunn, *Christology*, 171f, 174, 186, 188, 207f, 242 and 349). Implicit comparisons between Christ and the Law are also found in Rom 10.6ff and 1 Cor 1.18-25 *et al.* Referring to Paul, Davies, *Judaism*, 148f writes that in "a real sense conformity to Christ, His teaching and His life has taken the place for Paul of conformity to the Jewish Torah... We should accept on a priori grounds that attributes ascribed to the Torah revealed on Sinai would by the Apostle be transferred to Christ."

⁸⁸ Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 173 calls vv9f an exposition of the first line of the quotation. However, vv9f show no interest in the phrase ἡχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν. The slender link between this phrase and the *filling the universe*

exposition of ἀναβὰς εἰς ὕψος ἡχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν, while v11 gives an ecclesiological comment on the phrase ἔδωκεν δόματα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. To this observation we will return a little later.

The Ascent-Descent Theme in Relation to Psalm 68.18 (Eph 4.9)

The emphasis on ascension in Eph 4 naturally has its main parallels in much of the Jewish literature dealing with the giving of the Torah to Moses.⁸⁹ The uniquely Ephesian feature is the inference of the descent from the ascent. This has an implicit parallel in Ps 68: presumably YHWH had to descend before ascending on the mountain. The deduction of a descent is also implied in the Jewish appropriations of Ps 68.18 as a celebration of the giving of the Torah. The difference is that here the descent followed the ascent. At this point Eph 4.9 is closer to Ps 68 than to the most common Jewish use of this Psalm. Nevertheless, it would have been quite possible for early Christians to see some measure of parallel also between the deduction of Christ's descent and the descent of Moses, having received the Torah on the mountain.⁹⁰

It is interesting to note with Caird⁹¹ the parallel between the Pentecostal theme of giving gifts to the church (Eph 4.7,11ff) and the possible use of Ps 68 as part of Jewish Pentecost festivities.⁹² This might prove decisive for interpreting the emphasis on the continuity⁹³ between him who ascended and him who descended in vv9f.⁹⁴ The

language at the end of v10 is not developed. This is despite the clear suitability of this phrase to express an idea prominent elsewhere in the epistle (cf ch 1.21f). Instead the writer's argument focuses sharply on the ascent-descent theme.

⁸⁹ Further to my discussion of parallels from Qumran and the rabbinic literature cf Segal, "Ascent", 1352-68. A notable text in this regard is ExR 28.1. In view of the numerous rabbinic texts which link Moses' ascension with the giving of the Torah there is no need to take TgPs 68 into consideration at this point (*pace* Harris, "Descent").

⁹⁰ If so, it would be tempting for the interpreter of vv9f to go further. Whereas Judaism looked back to the coming down of Moses from the mountain to deliver the Torah, Christ's followers look back to his coming down from "high above all heavens" to the "lower parts of the earth" (vv9f), something expounded further in the following verses. Whereas Moses descended to deliver the Torah, Christ descended to bring reconciliation by dying on the cross (cf ch 2.16).

⁹¹ Caird, *Descent*, 537ff.

⁹² For a careful discussion of Caird's arguments cf Harris, "Descent", 197ff.

⁹³ Again cf Acts 2.32 which implies the same emphasis on him who descended and ascended.

⁹⁴ This aspect is regarded as the only unique contribution of Ephesians by Harris, "Descent", 234.

descent has traditionally been interpreted as referring either to Christ's incarnation or even his death. But neither could have been inferred from Ps 68, nor indeed from the adapted version of v18 which is quoted in v8, except, of course, if the deduction was already commonly accepted and hence presupposed by the quoted text. If so, Eph 4.9f does little more than remind its readers of a common Christian Pentecostal theme.⁹⁵

However, it was precisely the alteration in wording which led to von Soden and Abbott suggesting that the descent was a reference to Pentecost. Caird took the suggestion further by moving from arguments over the internal logic of the text⁹⁶ to the theological observation that the traditional argument that Christ should have defeated the evil powers in the underworld would seem to run counter to the frequent assertion in Ephesians that the powers are located ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις. Instead the author combined his constant focus on the ἐπουρανίοις motif throughout the epistle with the inference that Moses, who is celebrated by Jews as the one who ascended, must have descended as well. In deliberate parallel to the mountain motif (cf Exod 20), he set the earth over against the heavenly realms—τὰ κατώτερα τῆς γῆς—so as to allow for Christ's ascent and descent. The writer does not suggest that Christ descended into Hades, but stresses that he who descended to earth at Pentecost is continuous with him who had previously ascended into the heavenly realm (Eph 1.20 and 2.6).

This means that far from being removed from the situation of his church, Christ is present through the gifts of the Spirit. Ch 1.10 shows that the author normally sees the universe as consisting of two parts, heaven and earth. The same division is envisaged in ch 4.9f. Therefore, just as the phrase ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις does not imply a multiplicity of heavens, so the genitive τῆς γῆς may well not denote partition, but might have to be construed as a genitive of apposition. Grammatical support is said to come from the observation that Ephesians is fond of using genitives of apposition, especially in ch

⁹⁵ This would appear to be confirmed by the lack of need to elaborate on the change of wording in the quotation, but also by the otherwise difficult to explain deduction of the descent from the ascent which may well reflect the common descent-ascent christology evidenced elsewhere in the NT, particularly in John's Gospel, Phil 2.6-11 and Rom 10.6f. Acts 2.32f also affords a close parallel: descent-ascent-pouring out of the Spirit.

⁹⁶ Luther's version "dass er zuvor ist hinuntergefahren" is based on a secondary gloss in the textual tradition (added in $\aleph^2$, B, C³ *et al* for the purpose of elucidating the meaning, but omitted in $\aleph^*$, p⁴⁶, A, D, 1739 *et al*), but may—despite Caird's argument—be a correct interpretation. This is to be further discussed below.

6.14-17. The NEB translation "he descended to the earth below" seems vindicated.

If Caird's suggestion is adopted,⁹⁷ the descent in Ephesians is a logical extension of the Pentecost motif which had been sparked off by the Jewish reinterpretation and use of Ps 68.18 in the context of annual Law commemorating Pentecost festivals. This would, if vindicated, strongly underpin the view that the change in wording was a deliberate manoeuvre which had the aim of showing Christ's superiority by highlighting the exceeding benefits of the Christian Pentecost.⁹⁸ Although Caird does not pursue this, Eph 4.8 could then be seen as an example of a polemical and sectarian re-definition of traditions normally associated with the mother religion, Judaism.⁹⁹ This has little to do with midrash understood as an exposition of Scripture itself.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Schnackenburg, "Christus", 281 refutes Caird's suggestion without good reasons. Harris, "Descent", 197-207 offers a more informative critique of Caird's argument. His extensive discussion highlights some weaknesses in Caird's chain of evidence. Nevertheless, for additional evidence supporting Caird's view in principle see Lincoln, "Use", 157.

⁹⁸ In order to be able to argue that Ephesians was predisposed to infer a descent from the ascent as a result of various Jewish Moses' ascent traditions, there was no need for Harris to study the Targum as extensively as he did. Not only did his careful study show somewhat predictably that the Targumic tradition cannot be traced back confidently to the first century AD, his judgment that the descent mentioned in Eph 4 may have been triggered by Moses' descent after having received the Torah could be based quite independently on other strands of evidence which suggest a pre-Christian link between Jubilees, Jewish Pentecost and Ps 68. See Harris, "Descent", 197-219 and Kretschmar, "Himmelfahrt", 209ff who finds important evidence highlighting the significant age of the connection between Jewish Pentecost and the giving of the Torah, thus corroborating the later rabbinic evidence. Harris, "Descent", 218 includes a list of commentators who consent to Kretschmar's proposal. Nevertheless, we shall see that there are reasons to doubt that Eph 4 has in mind an ascent-descent order.

⁹⁹ Again Harris, "Descent", 227 mentions only briefly the possibility of a deliberately polemical use of Ps 68 in Eph 4. In a footnote he argues that the "polemical" understanding could be strengthened if "Moses" appeared elsewhere in the letter, which is not the case. What he fails to take into account is the unusual mention of "covenants" in ch 2.12 and the explicit polemic against the Torah in ch 2.13ff. The decisive advantage of the "polemical" interpretation is that it faces up to the radical alteration in wording rather better than the argument for the first century A.D. existence of a textual precursor of TgPs 68 which may have been known to the author of Ephesians. It would be astonishing if the posited tradition had no influence at all on any of the numerous rabbinic quotations from/allusions to Ps 68 discussed by Harris himself.

¹⁰⁰ It may be added at this point that considering the associations triggered by the quotation of the postulated Christian reworking of the Jewish interpretation/adaptation of Ps 68 combined with the Pentecostal subtheme, there is a strong

Caird's proposal, which I have extended somewhat, is attractive and well argued.¹⁰¹ One wonders, however, whether Eph 4.9f really presupposes that the ascent preceded the descent. If the descent followed the ascent, how can it be deduced from the latter (v9)? Surely the deduction of the descent makes more sense if it preceded the ascent. It is from the observation that Christ had to ascend—that is in order to return—that it can be inferred that he must have descended first. The fact that a descent into Hades cannot be inferred from Christ's ascent¹⁰² does not rule out any deduction of a prior descent from the subsequent ascent.¹⁰³ It is better to accept, with Schnackenburg,¹⁰⁴ the sequence suggested in v10a: he who descended is the one who subsequently ascended. This verse was included precisely to clarify the sequence of movements. Otherwise it would be difficult to explain its rationale.¹⁰⁵ The writer is evidently at pains to convey a sense of direction in Christ's movements: they start with his descent to the lower parts of the earth and culminate in the filling of all things. There is no implication of a subsequent descent, nor indeed a descent "to the lower parts of the earth".¹⁰⁶

The postulated early Christian adaptation, which is quoted in Eph 4.8 and which is interpreted as implying a prior descent, clearly is closer to the original Psalm than the Jewish interpretation with which it competes. This does not mean that the adaptation quoted in Eph 4.8 interprets Ps 68. It simply means that this piece of early Christian polemic as interpreted in vv9f shares a major implication with Ps 68.

possibility that the intended readership of Ephesians will have included Christians with a Jewish background or Judaistic inclination, perhaps even former God-fearers or proselytes.

¹⁰¹ Cf Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 244-7 for further discussion.

¹⁰² This point is made by Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 245 against the traditional "descent into Hades" interpretation of our passage.

¹⁰³ A deduction of a prior descent from the subsequent ascent is in any case more in keeping with the implication of Ps 68 than any deduction of a subsequent descent, although this may not be decisive for interpreting Ephesians. This is a clear difference between Eph 4 and the Jewish application of Ps 68 to Moses. There is no problem with deducing that Moses, having ascended to receive the Torah, had to descend in order to deliver it. It would be much more difficult, however, to logically deduce the necessity of a subsequent descent from Christ's ascension.

¹⁰⁴ Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 180.

¹⁰⁵ Caird, *Letters*, 75 has very little to say about v10. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 247 argues that the phrase underlines "that the psalm citation applies to Christ, the one who descended and ascended..." and notes "...that the writer often labors points unnecessarily."

¹⁰⁶ Whether or not the comparative form can function as a superlative is largely immaterial. The phrase in all probability expresses Christ's willingness to descend from his previous sphere of glory (cf Phil 2.7f).

This is not true of the relevant rabbinic traditions. More important for now is the observation that vv9f may have simply served to remind the readers of their common descent-ascent christology which formed an essential part of their understanding of Pentecost (cf Acts 2.32f).¹⁰⁷ The quotation in Eph 4.8-10 is not a *faux pas*,¹⁰⁸ but more likely a deliberate reiteration of an early Christian rhetorical manoeuvre which will undoubtedly have caused a stir among those who had not yet left behind the Jewish Torah in favour of an exclusive commitment to Christ.

Despite rejecting Caird's claim that the descent follows the ascent and therefore refers to the giving of the Spirit, there is no doubt that Pentecost forms a significant sub-theme of these verses.¹⁰⁹ One of Caird's main theological insights can be retained even if the descent is interpreted as the incarnation, which includes Christ's death. Moreover, the interpretation (Eph 4.9) of the postulated early Christian piece as a reference to the death of Christ can appeal to the parallel of Paul's use of probably pre-Pauline material in Phil 2.8f. Both texts move rather similarly from Christ's death to his exaltation.¹¹⁰ When it is asked what the theological rationale might have been behind the deduction of a prior descent (incarnation) from the ascent,¹¹¹ the likely answer is this: the one who is now above the heavens is the same as he who has already demonstrated his nearness or presence by virtue of his prior descent to the lower parts of the

¹⁰⁷ The objection that our writer was not aware of an ascension tradition in the sense of Luke-Acts (Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 242; cf Lohfink, *Himmelfahrt*, 87) is relativised if the ascension language of Ephesians is not derived directly from the OT, but from a common early Christian adaptation (cf perhaps even Jn 3.13; 6.33,38,50f,58,62; 20.17). For a similar line of thought cf Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 180.

¹⁰⁸ Mitton, *Ephesians*, 146.

¹⁰⁹ It would clearly be wrong to regard the sequence descent-ascent and the presence of the Pentecost sub-theme as mutually exclusive alternatives. It would also be fallacious to automatically deduce from the prior descent or incarnation the doctrine of a *descensus ad inferos* with the implication that Christ descended to hades in order to preach the gospel to the unsaved dead. It is more plausible to interpret the descent as Christ's incarnation which culminated in his death (cf Büchsel, "κατώτερος", 641-3) and subsequent exaltation.

¹¹⁰ Phil 2 sees Christ's death as an extension of his incarnation. There is no compelling reason why this should not be the case in Eph 4 as well (cf also Rom 10.6f). If anything, the inherent logic of the deduction of the descent appears to imply that the ascension is to the same location from which the descent took place.

¹¹¹ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 246.

earth,¹¹² even to the point of death. The ascension is not departure, but a step towards completion.¹¹³ Christ ascended to provide the gifts necessary for the church "to attain... the stature of the fullness of Christ" (v13), a theme reiterated in vv12,13 and 15f. It is because of this implicit but, nevertheless, strong concern with the nearness of Christ that the writer refrains from elaborating on the phrase ἡχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν. Also, Ps 68.18 alludes to the victory celebrations which followed a particular military success. The subjection of the enemies would have preceded the celebrations. This does not fit the requirements of Eph 4.8ff. Here the ἵνα clause introduces what follows the ascent, the giving of gifts to the Church (vv11ff). The underlying theme at this point in the letter is primarily Christ's presence with his church, and only secondarily his superiority over the powers.

The scene is set for the following verses which show the superiority of Christ—who is both gift and giver—over Moses.¹¹⁴ There is not only a familiar emphasis on the identity of him who ascended and who had descended (Acts 2.32f, Phil 2.8), but also on the fact that he continues to be near his church by providing the decisive gifts (vv7,8,11ff). The relationship between Christ and Torah may no longer be as explicit as in ch 2, but in connection with the Pentecostal sub-theme it probably continues to provide a significant theological framework within which to interpret the emphasis of these verses on Christ's presence before and after the ascension.

The Fullness Theme in Relation to the Altered Quotation (Eph 4.10)

V10 continues to stress the identity of the one who had both descended and subsequently ascended. Given the suggested sequence of descent-ascent it is not as surprising as it would otherwise be that the writer here returns to the importance of the ascent. The descent is used by the author to throw light on the ascent. The Christ who ascended above all the heavens is the same as he who had previously

¹¹² This is precisely the point made in Rom 10.6ff. It is furthermore the reason behind the elaborate list of gifts given to the Church (vv11ff): Christ still cares for his Church (cf 5.29).

¹¹³ A further but secondary reason may have been the author's desire to bring out the similarity in movement (descent-ascent) between Christ and YHWH (Ps 68), as opposed to Moses (ascent-descent). But this remains speculative.

¹¹⁴ The implication that Christ's prior descent more closely resembles that of YHWH, as implied in Ps 68, than does Moses' subsequent descent can only serve to underline the strength of the Christian adaptation quoted in v8: Christ had emulated YHWH to an extent which does not apply to Moses.

descended to the lower parts of this earth. It may well be futile to attempt to establish the number of heavens envisaged. Clearly the phrase is a summary expression for the success and superiority of Christ's mission which correlates with the εἰς ὕψος language of the quotation. In the light of this and the Jewish history of interpretation of Ps 68, it may be worth pointing out the possibility that the scope of the ascent, namely above all the heavens, is understood by the writer to underline Christ's superiority not only over the powers,¹¹⁵ but equally over the ascending Moses who climbed the mountain to receive the Torah;¹¹⁶ but this remains uncertain.

In any case, the primary thrust of the passage is perhaps not to bring out superiority, but kerygmatic continuity: to be committed to the Christ of the incarnation and death on the cross means to respect his continuous gifts to the church.¹¹⁷ There can be little doubt that the filling of all things includes not only the submission of the powers but at the same time the giving of the gifts (vv11ff). In view of this, the ἵνα clause can almost certainly be regarded as an elaboration of the last line of the text quoted in v8: ἔδωκεν δόματα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. This means that Schnackenburg's observation that v11 should be regarded as the ecclesiological exposition of the last line of the quotation¹¹⁸ ought to be qualified slightly. The ecclesiological exposition starts with the closing phrase of v10. The ἵνα clause in effect introduces the listing and discussion of the gifts provided "according to the measure of Christ's giving" (v7). Evidently the quotation (v8) and the exposition (vv9f) play a foundational rather than a cosmetic role within the entire passage (vv7-16).

¹¹⁵ The powers are not actually mentioned in this connection, nor does the writer seem interested at this point in the undeniable potential of the phrase ἡχμαλώτευσεν αἰχμαλωσίαν. Apparently it is not so much the superiority of Christ over the powers that is the writer's main concern here, but cf ch 1.20-23 which combines the fulness theme with the powers.

¹¹⁶ Such a link between Torah emphasis and the "powers" is familiar also from Col 2.8-10. The tradition quoted in Eph 4.8 and its interpretation probably allude disapprovingly to the Torah-centeredness which lies at the heart of the Jewish understanding of Ps 68, but succeed at the same time in bringing out a parallel between YHWH's action in Ps 68 and the role played by Christ (cf Jn 3.13; 6.33-62 and 20.17).

¹¹⁷ This conclusion appears plausible not only on the basis of the temporal priority of the descent, but is also demanded by the striking emphasis on the descending Christ in v10 (ὁ καταβάς αὐτὸς ἐστὶν καὶ...). Although the following discussion (vv11ff) depends on the ascension, the writer stresses that he who ascended is no other than he who had to descend first. Glory and cross are held together. Only together can they form a basis for a proper perspective on Christ's gifts to the church.

¹¹⁸ Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 18

Theologically it is significant that the writer felt it necessary to set out the christological foundations of vv8-10 before developing his teaching on gifts. Having previously emphasised Christ's superiority over the powers (ch 1.20-3; 3.10f), he now perceives a need to balance this by reminding his readers of what was required on Christ's part to achieve this position of 'fullness' above the heavens. Evidently Christ's church has to learn from this, as the believers have not yet attained anywhere near the measure of the fullness of Christ (v13). To achieve this the church needs Christ's gifts, the apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers (v12). In this way the diversity of Christ's gifts serves the unity of his body (vv1-6 and 12f).¹¹⁹

The fullness theme which was employed in ch 1 to express Christ's superiority over the powers has now been applied more specifically to the role to be played by the church. To say of Christ that he ascended to "fill all things" is to make more than a statement about his superiority. The clause in effect marks the point where christology and ecclesiology merge. The text quoted in v8 and the interpretation attached to it proved a convenient way of moving the discussion on from the measure of Christ's gift (v7) to the use of Christ's gifts in the church.

CONCLUSION: EPHESIANS 4.7-11 IN CONTEXT

The widespread assumption that Ephesians draws on a Jewish interpretative tradition, reflected also in the TgPs 68, cannot be substantiated. Although TgPs 68 can be regarded as a logical extension of common rabbinic reinterpretations of Ps 68, Targum Psalms is rather late. Nevertheless it can reasonably be maintained that Ephesians quoted a text form other than Ps 68 itself—which the author expected his audience to know. In view of the probable use of an early Christian tradition in Eph 5.14b, it was suggested that the same may apply to Eph 4.8. This is supported by the presence of the same unusual introductory formula *διὸ λέγει*. This explanation would account for the fact of the deliberately introduced quotation coupled with the stark difference in wording between Eph 4.8 and Ps 68.18.

Given the interesting Jewish history of interpretation of Ps 68, a likely *Sitz im Leben* of this postulated early Christian tradition is the

¹¹⁹ In view of this it would be wrong to separate sharply between the emphasis on oneness in vv1-6 and the verses that follow.

theological difference between the Christian and Jewish Pentecost. Ps 68 played a major part in the latter. This was only possible by reinterpreting what was originally a military victory Psalm as a celebration of the giving of the Torah to Moses. Christian exegesis disagreed with this prominent use of Ps 68, but saw a significant rhetorical opportunity. It polemically emulated the Jewish reinterpretation of Ps 68, but adapted it decisively to apply to Christ, rather than Moses or the Torah. The resulting emendation is unlikely to have been understood as strictly speaking an interpretation of Ps 68 itself. However, it enabled early Christians to use Ps 68 for Pentecost in a way parallel to its Jewish use. The quotation and interpretation of this probably well known Christian piece in Eph 4.8-10 also plays on the fact that the parallel between Christ and YHWH—descent and subsequent ascent—is closer than that between Moses, where the ascent preceded the descent, and YHWH.

If the above reconstruction is correct, the midrash that follows the quotation is not directly concerned with Ps 68, but with the Christian polemic against what was thought to be a Torah-centred misuse of the Psalm. The midrash reminds the readers of their common descent-ascent christology. What motivation could the writer have had for elaborating so extensively on this Christian piece quoted in v8. The text quoted in v8 may well have been formulated in response to the radical Jewish reinterpretation of Ps 68, but this in itself does not suffice to explain the need for the midrash.

The midrash reflects the chronological order descent-ascent, so the author's rationale could be paraphrased as follows: *The fact that Jesus had to ascend means that he had already descended before. It follows that everything his ascension stands for is based on his prior descent.*¹²⁰ *Therefore, the "measure of the gift of Christ" given to believers (v7) has been achieved at the cost of his descent to the lower parts of the earth.* To highlight this point, v10 stresses that the ascended Christ is no other than he who had descended. It is only after having developed this point that the author proceeds to specify some of the gifts Christ gave.

It might be suggested that v11 picks up where v7 left off. This would be to ignore that the writer was at pains to elaborate on the continuity between the glorious giver of gifts and the one who had been to the lower parts of the earth. Vv8-10 are designed to alert the readers not to neglect the role of Christ prior to his ascension. Only then can they comprehend the significance of the gifts given by

¹²⁰ Presumably the ascension started with the resurrection—cf leading captives captives?—just as his descent or incarnation culminated in his death.

Christ to the church. Having made this point with the help of an early Christian piece of polemic, the writer moves on to specify the gift(s) of Christ in vv11ff, but not without reminding his audience again in vv12f that the diversity his gifts must be used to serve the unity of Christ's body.

CHAPTER FIVE

ETHICS IN EPHESIANS 4.25-30 AND 5.18

This chapter need not be as extensive as previous ones because the use of OT material in Eph 4.25-30 and 5.18 is much more incidental and less elaborate than what we have encountered so far. In some cases it is not clear whether the author wished the relevant phrases to be understood as deliberate OT reminiscences at all, or whether the verbal overlap is a coincidence or the result of subconscious indirect OT influence. In view of this uncertainty I shall in some cases speak of allusions or even reminiscences.

Quotations are found in Eph 4.25/Zech 8.16; and 4.26a/Ps 4.5. In each case Ephesians follows LXX closely.¹ While this applies technically to the overlap between Prov 23.31 and Eph 5.18, it should not be called a deliberate quotation or allusion, but at best a reminiscence. A probable allusion to Isa 63.10 is found in Eph 4.30. Conceptual reminiscences of Deut 24.15 and Lev 19.11,13 appear in Eph 4.26b and 28.²

The aim of this chapter is to show that this passage specifically draws on OT material.³ Each section will be preceded by a chart which sets out the extent of the parallels between Ephesians and the relevant OT verses.

¹ The only exception is Eph 4.25 which has μετά + genitive instead of πρὸς + accusative. There is no change in meaning.

² Possibly the author was here also thinking of the seventh commandment (cf his quotation of the fourth commandment in ch 6.2f). Sampley, "Scripture", 105 also claims an OT background for the juxtaposition of σαπρός and ἁγαθός in v29. But even if correct, this cannot be traced to one specific text.

³ As will become clear, such a background is considerably more likely than the links with Essene writings suggested by Gnllka, "Traditions", 402ff.

SPEAK TRUTHFULLY TO YOUR NEIGHBOUR (EPH 4.25 & ZECH 8.16)

Eph: λαλεῖτε ἀλήθειαν ἕκαστος μετὰ τοῦ πλησίου αὐτοῦ

Zech: λαλεῖτε ἀλήθειαν ἕκαστος πρὸς τὸν πλησίον αὐτοῦ

The practical hortatory section which begins here has been prepared for carefully by the author. Ch 2.15 introduced the creation of a new man. In ch 3.16 this new man is assumed to be by the Spirit of God. Ch 4.22 states negatively: the old man and his life style is to be put off. The paradigm of the new man is *truthful righteousness and holiness*. This statement is expounded practically in vv25ff⁴ which clearly take up v15.⁵

V25 quotes a statement from Zech 8.16 which uses the keywords ἀλήθεια + πλησίον. Perhaps because of this Lindemann argues that the wording originates with the author and that its agreement with the LXX wording is purely coincidental.⁶ Jewish parenetical sources frequently warn against lying⁷ and Test Dan 5.2 quotes from Zech 8.16.⁸ But this does not necessarily mean, as Gnika and Lincoln hold,⁹ that the use of Zechariah was mediated through Jewish parenesis. The writer of Ephesians shows such a profound knowledge and calculated use of OT texts throughout the epistle, that this assumption becomes unnecessary.¹⁰ When Gnika points to the widespread occurrence of the warning to speak truthfully to one's neighbour, he ignores the fact that even the closest parallel to Eph 4.25 (Test Dan 5.2) does not agree verbatim with Zech 8.16 (LXX).¹¹ Ephesians, on the other hand, clearly draws on the Greek text of Zechariah and can be regarded as a quotation rather than mediated general Jewish ethical tradition.

⁴ The juxtaposition of the old and the new man in vv17-24 finds its continuation in vv25ff where negative statements are repeatedly transformed into positive instructions ("Don't do this, instead...").

⁵ Note the double combination of being *members of the body* and *truthfulness*.

⁶ Lindemann, *Aufhebung*, 82 and 86 denies yet again that the author of Ephesians deliberately employed the OT.

⁷ See Test Reub 6.9 and Test Dan 5.2 *et al.*

⁸ See Gnika, "Traditionen" 403.

⁹ Gnika, "Traditionen", 403 and Lincoln, "Use", 43.

¹⁰ See also Sampley, "Scripture", 103 n9.

¹¹ Better Charles, *Testaments*, 127 who comments in the margin of his Greek edition of Testament Daniel that Ephesians uses Zech 8.16 independently. While Ephesians and Zechariah LXX agree consistently, Testament Daniel reads ἀλήθειαν φθέγγεσθε...

It is impossible to know whether the readers were expected to recognise this as a quotation. Perhaps the likeliest scenario is that the author expected Jewish but not gentile readers to appreciate the OT source. In any case, to call the influence which Zech 8.16 exerted on Eph 4.25 a quotation is simply to acknowledge the author's awareness of the OT source. Possibly he hoped to add the weight of OT teaching to his own ethical exhortations. At the same time he may well have wished to show that his own moral teaching was entirely in keeping with OT ethics. For gentile readers the exhortation to speak the truth to one's neighbour would have been seen as primarily general Christian ethical teaching.

In contrast to Lincoln, Sampley claims that not only the wording of v25 but also the form of vv25ff derives from Zech.¹² But that appears to be going too far. Apart from the quoted text itself the only parallel is the focus on righteousness (Eph 4.24f/Zech 8.16) and the application of this principle in the form of a few rules. The fact that both texts contrast *formerly* with *now*¹³ does not make it a real parallel since such a setting is naturally enough presupposed by Christian ethical admonition. Nevertheless, the quotation itself (v25) and the combination of righteousness with truthfulness in the previous verse¹⁴ show that the author had the OT in mind.

IN YOUR ANGER DO NOT SIN (EPH 4.26A & PS 4.5A LXX)

Eph: ὀργίσεσθε καὶ μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε

Psalm: ὀργίσεσθε καὶ μὴ ἁμαρτάνετε

The wording of Ephesians corresponds exactly to that of the LXX. The dependence on Ps 4.5 is further supported by the fact that the imperative is a *hapax legomenon* within the Pauline Corpus.¹⁵

MT has the expression רָגַזוּ וְאֵל-תַּחֲטְאוּ. While רָגַזוּ literally means *shake* or *tremble*, on most occasions it expresses "agitation growing out of some deeply rooted emotion".¹⁶ Hence Craigie paraphrases,

¹² Ibid, 107-9.

¹³ Ibid, 108 n18.

¹⁴ This combination is one of the author's favourites (4.24; 5.9; 6.14) and may have been inspired by the preference of the same combination in Isa 11.5; 33.15; 45.19; 48.1 and 59.4.14.

¹⁵ Direct use of the OT is also assumed by Abbott, *Ephesians*, 139 and Ernst, *Briefe*, 367.

¹⁶ Bowling, "רגז", 831.

"you can tremble with anger and rage, but don't sin by doing anything".¹⁷ This agrees with the modern RSV and NIV translations. LXX and Ephesians are correct in eliminating any ambiguity by translating וַיִּנָּח as ὀργίζεσθε. The Hebrew allows for taking the first imperative as hypothetical, and this is how we should probably understand LXX and Ephesians (cf v31).

That this admonition was directed to a specific situation need not be assumed. The variety of admonitions in vv25ff testifies to the general character of the parenesis. At the same time it must not be ignored that the string of five close OT appropriations within no more than six verses (vv25-30) is hardly coincidental. The exhortation not to sin in anger could be seen as sound general advice; but it would seem that the main purpose of the string of quotations from the Jewish Scriptures was to add authority to the admonition. The author again appears to have presupposed some appreciation of the quotational character of v26a on the part of his audience.

DO NOT LET THE SUN GO DOWN (EPH 4.26B; PS 4.5B & DEUT 24.15)

Eph: ὁ ἥλιος μὴ ἐπιδυέτω

Deut: οὐκ ἐπιδύσεται ὁ ἥλιος ἐπ' αὐτῷ

Psalm: λέγετε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν καὶ ἐπὶ ταῖς κοίταις
ὑμῶν κατανύγητε διάψαλμα

The verbal overlap with Deut 24 is evident, although this does not in itself necessitate the assumption of direct influence. The link with Ps 4.5b, if present at all, is only conceptual and even less compelling. Nevertheless, in the light of the clear influence of Ps 4.5a on the earlier part of the same verse it is likely that v26b also found its inspiration to some degree in Ps 4.5b ("...when you are in your beds, search your hearts and be silent"). If so, the author spelt out the concept implied in Ps 4.5b in language borrowed from Deut 24.15. This would be a matter of 'pearl stringing' two OT texts in order to show the ethical compatibility between the epistle and the Torah. If deliberate, the aim may have been to guard against the charge of libertine sectarianism, a charge possibly levelled at him by Judaizing Christians. Admittedly it is possible that the lack of verbal links with Ps 4.5b indicate a more tacit use of OT language than

¹⁷ Craigie, *Psalms 1-50*, 81.

suggested here. But the author was influenced at least to some degree by the wording of Deut 24¹⁸ and possibly by Ps 4.5.

Evidently the writer is evidently not interested in the original context of Deut 24. But the original thrust of Ps 4.5, namely to let God take care of one's anger, fits the context of Eph 4.15ff beautifully. In the *Vorlage* God replaces the anger which resulted from the lies of others (v3) with a sense of joy and peace (vv8f). Ephesians runs exactly parallel: the warning not to sin (cf Ps 4.5) presupposes a situation of bad feelings resulting from the neglect of truth and the reign of lies (v25). For anyone familiar with the Psalm it would have been clear that what the author of Ephesians asks from the new man (v24) has been foreshadowed by the Psalmist's own experience (Ps 4.8f). The least that can be said is that the Psalm was in the author's mind and that it exercised an influence on Eph 4 which goes beyond that of pure language borrowing, a point frequently missed by commentators on Ephesians.¹⁹

HE WHO HAS STOLEN MUST STEAL NO LONGER (EPH 4.28 & LEV 19.11)

Eph: ὁ κλέπτων μηκέτι κλεπτέτω

Lev: οὐ κλέψετε

The only parallel here is the command itself. Although this is clearly not a quotation, the question arises whether the author may have been thinking of the seventh commandment as preserved in Lev 19.11. Given the quotation from the fourth commandment of the decalogue in ch 6.2f this must at least be considered a strong possibility. Secondly, there is a noteworthy link between this text and Deut 24.15 which two verses earlier provided the concept of fulfilling an obligation before the sun goes down. In Leviticus the command not to steal is also applied to the obligation of paying wages before the night breaks in. While the text does not speak of the

¹⁸ The only occurrence of the concept of not letting the sun go down before fulfilling a certain duty in the OT is found in Deut 24.15. There it is applied to the duty of paying wages on the same day the work had been performed. The same verse emphasises that an employer commits sin if he fails to do so. Ephesians changes the third person singular indicative ἐπιδύσεται with imperative force to the imperative ἐπιδυέτω.

¹⁹ The failure to point out the possible link between Eph 4.25b and Ps 4.5b in Nestle-Aland²⁶ is undoubtedly due to the fact that the proposed link is conceptual rather than verbal.

sun going down, the parallel in thought is nevertheless evident. Again it is a conceptual point of contact between two OT texts which caused the author of Ephesians to combine them.²⁰

DO NOT GRIEVE GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT - EPH 4.30 AND ISA 63.10

Eph: μὴ λύπετε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ

Isa: αὐτοὶ δὲ παρώξυναν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον

Ephesians turns the indicative statement of Isaiah into a warning or imperative. At the same time λυπεῖν is substituted for παρώξυναν (LXX). It comes closer to the Hebrew רָצַח and also corresponds to the translation of the same Hebrew verb elsewhere in the LXX.²¹ The concept grieving the Holy Spirit is therefore likely to stem from Isa 63.10. According to Sampley, it also occurs "frequently" in the Shepherd of Hermas and in the Testament of Isaiah.²² But this does not necessarily mean that Isa 63.10 was mediated to Ephesians via "Jewish ethical advice", as Sampley suggests.²³ In view of the author's own roots in Isaiah, this assumption becomes unnecessary.

Within the NT Stephen is reported in Acts 7.51 to have accused the Sanhedrin of resisting (ἀντιπίπτω) the Holy Spirit "like your fathers". Although the verb is different, it is possible in view of his quotation from Isa 66.1f that the formulation of his attack was also influenced by Isa 63.10. In alluding to this verse Stephen practically accused the Jewish religious authorities of resisting God to such an extent that he turns and finds against them (Isa 63.10). Readers of Acts and Ephesians rooted in the Jewish Scriptures may have recognised this as the materialisation of the curse which God vowed to bring upon the people of Israel if they disregarded his covenant (Lev 26.17). Such was the strength of the Prophetic reminder in Isa 63.

Owing to the brevity of the allusion in Ephesians, it is impossible to ascertain whether the author used it in a way similarly critical of Israel as Stephen is reported to have done in Acts 7. On the basis of

²⁰ What has been said in the previous footnote regarding Eph 4.26b applies also to v28.

²¹ Sampley, "Scripture", 104 n13.

²² Ibid, 104. In the DSS CD 7.2-4 grieving one's (!) holy spirit is combined with the warning not to bear malice from day to the next (cf Eph 4.26b).

²³ Ibid, 105.

my previous discussion of ch 2.13-17, this would certainly not be surprising. It must, however, remain speculative.

Within the epistle, ch 4.30 stands in parallel to ch 1.13 where the sealing with the Spirit is emphatically bracketed by the clause εἰς ἔπαινον τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ. Ch 4.30 expresses the same thought negatively: "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit!" What had been said in the introductory *berakah* in the language of praise has been reiterated practically and parenetically here with the help and authority of OT language.

THE STRUCTURE OF EPH 4.25-30

Taking up Sampley's suggestion that vv25-30 should be arranged in such a way as to separate the material which can clearly be paralleled in the OT (right) from the rest (left), the following arrangement emerges:

Therefore each of you must put off
falsehood

for we are members of one body.

while you are still angry, and do not
give the devil a foothold. He who
has been stealing

but must work, doing something
useful with his own hands, that he
may have something to share with
those in need. Do not let any
unwholesome talk come out of your
mouths,

with whom you were sealed for the
day of redemption.

and speak truthfully to his neighbour,

In your anger do not sin. Do not let
the sun go down

must steal no longer,

but only what is helpful for building
others up according to their needs, that
it may benefit those who listen. And
do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God,

While Sampley's assertion that the text displays "an antiphonal relationship"²⁴ between the OT material and its NT application is rather arbitrary,²⁵ the extent of injunctions traceable to the OT becomes nevertheless clear. Lindemann's tendency to attribute most instances of OT material to sheer coincidence is not tenable. Moreover, it is noteworthy that as elsewhere in the epistle, and indeed in the undisputed Pauline letters, the author shows a measure of influence from Isaiah (vv24,30[?] - cf 2.13ff; 5.14[?]; 6.14,17), the Pentateuch (vv26,28 - cf 5.31; 6.2f) and the Psalter (v26 - cf 1.20,23; 4.8-10).

DO NOT GET DRUNK ON WINE - EPH 5.18 AND PROV 23.31

Eph: μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἶνω

Prov: μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἶνω

The fact that the wording μὴ μεθύσκεσθε οἶνω coincides fully with the LXX (A) wording of Prov 23.31 could be explained as innocent everyday language. Yet, the sheer number of OT reminiscences in Eph 4.25ff and the redundant term οἶνος suggest that Prov 23 played at least some role in the wording of Eph 5.18.²⁶ Gnlika and Lincoln argue in the light of the occurrence of the same phrase in Test Jud 14.1 that the phrase was mediated via Jewish ethical traditions.²⁷ This is a possible assumption, but it is perhaps rather more complicated than assuming direct influence, however subconsciously, by the LXX rendering of Prov 23.31. In any case, it is unlikely that the phrase was meant as a deliberate allusion to the text of Proverbs.

More fruitful is the search for the cultural backdrop of the injunction. Taking up an earlier suggestion,²⁸ Rogers describes the impact of the Dionysian cult on Ephesus and Western Asia Minor. A

²⁴ Sampley, "Scripture", 106.

²⁵ Sampley has to admit, for instance, that there is no real parallel in the OT for v29 ("Scripture", 105).

²⁶ Apart from the possible verbal influence of Prov 23, οἶνος contrasts with πνεύματι, just as μὴ μεθύσκεσθε contrasts with πληρούσθε. This technique highlights the gulf which, as we shall see, exists between the religio-cultural past of the addressees and the ongoing challenges of the surrounding cults, on the one side, and the ethical requirements and basics of Christian social existence on the other.

²⁷ Gnlika, *Epheser*, 269 and Lincoln, "Use", 45.

²⁸ Rogers, "Background", 249-57 appears not to be aware of this. But cf Goodspeed, *Meaning*, 59.

major feature of this cult was the holding of orgies which included heavy intoxication with wine. The intention was to cause Dionysus to enter and fill the worshipper's body.²⁹ This often resulted in the worshipper having to comply with the will of the deity.³⁰ Interestingly the term σαώτης, which is a derivative of the term employed in Ephesians for the result of drunkenness, that is debauchery, was applied as a descriptive title to Dionysus.³¹

The attractiveness of interpreting Ephesians against this background is obvious. Being filled with the Spirit is to be substituted for getting drunk with wine. Speaking in psalms, singing hymns and making spiritual music (v19) forms the counterpart to the "raving of drunken worshippers singing praises to Dionysus".³² Similarly, the ethics of marriage as expounded in the immediately following ch 5.22-33 must take the place of sexual debauchery in the name of Dionysus. No doubt the author implies a gulf between the ethos of the surrounding cults—in which the audience are likely to have participated prior to their turning to the Christian faith—and that of authentic early Christian existence.

CONCLUSION

In at least some of the few verses discussed (Eph 4.25,26b), the author's dependence on the OT was deliberate to the extent of expecting the audience to recognise the OT material as such. In two cases (4.28 and 5.18), the use of OT phrases was much more incidental. Deliberate OT allusions are possible but by no means certain in 4.26b,30. It is clear, therefore, that each example of OT influence has to be assessed individually. Generalisations are not possible. In those instances where deliberate quotations or allusions can be assumed, the theological purpose of appropriating OT material appears to have been that of demonstrating ethical continuity between the Jewish Scriptures and the new 'covenant' of the Christian gospel. Having spoken of the abolition of the 'Law of commandments in regulations' earlier (ch 2.13-17), it became necessary for the author to reassure the wider audience of this ethical continuity by deliberately employing OT language. This points to a Jewish-minded element among the implied readership. The

²⁹ See Lewy, *Ebrietas*, 43f.

³⁰ See Homer, *Iliad*, 18.398.

³¹ Rogers, "Background", 256 n40.

³² *Ibid*, 257.

combination or 'pearl stringing' of some of the OT material employed appears to have been inspired by conceptual links between these OT texts themselves. The verbal links and, in a few cases, the conceptual parallels between Ephesians and the OT sources proposed are closer than those between Ephesians and the Essene texts cited by Gnilka. The appeal by some scholars to Jewish ethical teaching as the basis of the OT reminiscences evident in Eph 4.25ff is not entirely convincing. Although such mediation of traditions is a real possibility, vague parallels in inter-testamental literature are not in themselves compelling.³³ It is often simpler to explain the NT text on the assumption of direct influence by its OT source.

³³ This criticism must be directed against Gnilka, "Traditionen", 397ff who prefers "mediation" even in those instances where the verbal and conceptual overlap between Ephesians and the corresponding OT source is complete (cf Gnilka's p403). Koch, *Schrift*, examines Paul's use of OT text forms is to be preferred to Gnilka's approach. For the question of distinguishing quotations and allusion in Paul's epistles and for Pauline instances of freedom in appropriating OT material also see Koch (pp102-190). For a caution against attributing too many quotations to an author see Vox, "Identification", 416-32, but Vox is mainly interested in the OT.

CHAPTER SIX

TRADITION IN EPH 5.14

"This is why it is said: Wake up sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine upon you."

Some of the passages in Ephesians which contain definite or possible OT influence are considered by many scholars to reflect early Christian 'hymnic' material.¹ This applies to chs 1.10-23,² 2.13-18³ and above all to ch 5.14b. In addition, some instances of OT use fall within parenetical sections which are often regarded as "inexhaustible hunting grounds"⁴ for various types of traditions. This automatically brings to the forefront the question of whether the relevant OT material has been mediated to the author of Ephesians through possibly liturgical early Jewish-Christian tradition or whether he obtained it directly from the OT. In the case of ch 5.14b the possibility of underlying Christian material which itself made use of the Jewish Scriptures must be considered. The complex issue of detecting and form-critically evaluating such 'hymns' cannot be circumvented.

One of the striking features of Eph 5.14b (see also ch 4.8) is the preface διὸ λέγει. Despite being introduced as a quotation, the text is not found in anything approaching this form in the OT. This feature is not unique within the Pauline corpus. The origin of the quotations in 1 Cor 1.31; 2.9; 3.19b; 9.10; 15.33 and 2 Cor 4.6 is equally unclear, even though in each case an introductory formula is used.⁵ Some scholars regard Eph 5.14b as a fragment of a hymn, others have attempted to explain the verse as a weaving together of a number of OT texts. As the discussion of διὸ λέγει in my previous

¹ "Hymnic" is here not necessarily to be taken literally. Most scholars use the term for poetic phrases or texts which are thought to have been used in early Christian worship.

² See Schille, *Hymnen*, 58f; Deichgräber, *Gottes hymnus*, 161ff; Sanders, "Elements", 220-3 and Fischer, *Tendenz*, 118-20.

³ See Schille, *Hymnen*, 24ff and Deichgräber, *Gottes hymnus*, 165 as well as my discussion and the chart above in chapter three.

⁴ Barth, "Traditions", and Gnllka, "Traditionen".

⁵ See also 1 Tim 5.18b and 2 Tim 2.19b.

chapter showed, to infer from the introductory formula that the quoted text must stem directly from the OT would be unwarranted.⁶ In view of this uncertainty, we must ascertain the source of Eph 5.14b. Is this verse best seen as a collation of a variety of OT materials, or as a reflection of early Christian liturgical stock? The answer may prove beneficial in tracing the relevant motifs in further Biblical or non-Biblical texts. Finally v14b needs to be interpreted against its discursive background. The chapter outline is as follows:

Fragment of a Hymn?
 An Altered Scriptural Quotation?
 The Form-Critical Problem
 Evidence from Qumran
 Rabbinic Evidence
 The Flow of Thought
 Conclusion

FRAGMENT OF A HYMN?

What are the basic criteria to be used in the search for hymnic fragments or *formelhaftes Glaubensgut* (Stauffer) in the NT and how far are they applicable to this text? In 1941 Stauffer listed twelve such criteria. Schille set out further methodological considerations in 1965.⁷ Two years later Deichgräber followed; later still Wengst published his important monograph.⁸ In 1982 Barth gave new attention to the subject, specifically with Ephesians in view.⁹ I shall summarise briefly the main arguments put forward by these scholars for the detection of early Christian poetic material.

1. Extensive use of confessional terms like faith, confess, testify etc.
2. Disruption in style, syntax and terminology of the co-text.
3. Repeated use of the same text by the same author.
4. Avoidance of conjunctions, complicated syntax and articles.
5. Brevity in expression.
6. Antithetical statements.

⁶ In Gal 4.22, for instance, the formula γέγραπται γάρ introduces a statement which presupposes two separate chapters of the OT (Gen 16 and 21), but quotes from neither.

⁷ Stauffer, *Theologie*, 322 and Schille, *Hymnen*.

⁸ Deichgräber, *Gotteshymnus* and Wengst, *Formeln*.

⁹ Barth, "Traditions", 9-12.

7. Emphasis on rhythm, strophes, beat etc.
8. Absence of the name of the one to be praised.
9. Repetitions in thought and terminological pleonasms.
10. Preference for participles and relative clauses.
11. Normative stating of elementary truths and facts.
12. Introductory and end marker indicating the resumption of co-text.
13. First person plural pronouns and verbs.
14. Chiastic features and parallelism of members.
15. Interpretation following and referring to the traditional material.
16. Crucial arguments often followed by based on traditional material.

Some of these criteria are clearly more useful than others. Among the most useful arguments are undoubtedly those listed under headings 2, 3, 7, 9, 12, 14 and 15. Some of the others, such as the last argument listed, can at best be used as supporting evidence. Only where a number of these criteria apply to the same text can we confidently assume the presence of traditional elements. To go as far as attempting to locate a particular *Sitz im Leben* is even more fraught with danger.¹⁰ Much of what could conceivably be classified as early Christian hymns has no precedent in the history of religions and thus cannot be compared with other evidence. Even so, it is still possible that the mind responsible for the creation of the end product is the author's own.¹¹ However, although this cannot be ruled out as a matter of principle, there is one criterion which militates against assuming that the author himself created v14b on the basis of a number of OT texts: the introductory formula διὸ λέγει clearly suggests a source other than the author himself. This increases the plausibility of the 'hymn' option.

Support for the 'hymn' hypothesis comes from theologians as early as Origen and Theodoret of Cyprus¹² who are likely to have relied on even earlier interpreters. Other evidence includes the distinctly Christian character that appears to have been added to familiar terminology from the OT (cf Isa 26.19 and 60.1f). The existence of Christian hymns at a very early stage is probably attested in 1 Cor 14.26. We can furthermore expect *a priori* that early Christian

¹⁰ To recall Schille's own impression, there is hardly a single supposed hymn which has not been classified by some scholars as having originated in a eucharistic setting with others arguing for a baptismal liturgy as the likely *Sitz*.

¹¹ Barth, "Traditions", 12. Similarly Moule and Balchin (regarding Col 1.15-20) and Schmid, *Epheser*, 323.

¹² See Barth, *Ephesians*, 574 n83 and Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 234 n578. For a list of modern interpreters agreeing with this assumption see Schlier, *Epheser*, 240 n4.

worship drew heavily on Jewish Scriptural material. The possibility emerges that the author may have quoted early Christian material which in turn goes back to material drawn from the Jewish Scriptures.

The first features to note are the rhythmic beat and the *homoiooteleuton* of the first two lines. The somewhat clumsy double use of καί may be attributed to a desire to maintain the correct rhythm and length of lines. The same is true of the positioning of verbs at the beginning of each line. Beyer points to the order *imperative + imperative + future tense* and describes it as semitic.¹³ The two imperatives express the conditions which, if fulfilled, will result in what is promised by the future tense verbs. The emphasis on imperatives makes the phrase particularly suitable for the present context which bristles with imperatives. Its brevity, introduction and concise nature may point to its previous use in worship. A further argument for the traditional nature of the material is found in the term ἐπιφάσσει which is a NT *hapax legomenon*. Grammatically, one can point to the shift from second person plural verbs to singular forms. Two stylistic pointers clearly mark the beginning (διὸ λέγει) and the end (οὖν) of the material taken over from tradition.¹⁴

There is a strong case for regarding Eph 5.14b as being based on early Christian material. The latter may in turn be dependent on OT sources. Before seeking to underpin this proposal, the closeness of the proposed OT parallels to Eph 5.14b needs to be examined. These parallels have mainly been suggested prior to the rise of form-criticism and therefore prior to the emergence of the 'hymnic' theory.

AN ALTERED SCRIPTURAL QUOTATION?

A number of early interpreters of Ephesians¹⁵ suggested that v14b amalgamates a variety of verses taken from Isaiah, above all chs 9.1; 26.19-21; 51.9-17; 52.1 and 60.1f. Thomas Aquinas added Prov 6.9

¹³ Beyer, *Syntax* I, 238ff. Also Gnilka, *Epheser*, 260.

¹⁴ Cf. 2.19; 4.1,17; 5.1,7,15; 6.14 for instances where οὖν introduces admonition.

¹⁵ Among these was Hippolit, *Dan*, 4.56 and *Antichristo*, 65. Clement of Alexandria, *Propt*, 9.84 argues for a Jesus logion as the likeliest source. More recent interpreters arguing for some kind of OT origin include Beare, *Ephesians* and SB III, 608, with the latter claiming a *lapsus memoriae*. At the same time Beare also speaks of a fragment of an early Christian psalm. He does not proceed to link the two approaches although, as we shall see, this may well prove to be a promising avenue to take. McNamara, *Targum*, 81 n28 proposes to see Eph 4.8 and 5.14 as stemming from the same Christian hymn.

and Pss 13.2; 27.1; 41.8 to the list, while others put forward Deut 33.3 and Mal 4.2.¹⁶ Noack, however, seeks to show that the verse cannot be traced to specific OT texts at all.¹⁷ But for Eadie there is little doubt that the quotation stems from the OT.¹⁸ These widely diverging opinions make it imperative for us to review the issue afresh. In doing so we may take the cue from Noack who rightly argues that the only serious OT candidates in the list given above are Isa 26.19 and 60.1f.¹⁹ The LXX version of these texts reads as follows:

ἀναστήσονται οἱ νεκροί
καὶ ἐγερθήσονται οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις (Isa 26.19)
καὶ εὐφρανθήσονται οἱ ἐν τῇ γῇ.

Φωτίζου φωτίζου, Ἱερουσαλὴμ
ἥκει γάρ σου τὸ φῶς
καὶ ἡ δόξα κυρίου ἐπὶ σὲ ἀνατέταλκεν. (Isa 60.1f)
ἰδου σκότος καὶ γνόφος καλύψει γῆν ἐπ' ἔθνη
ἐπὶ δὲ σὲ φανήσεται κύριος
καὶ ἡ δόξα αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ σὲ ὀφθήσεται.

In comparison, Eph 5.14b, which is prefaced by the introductory formula διὸ λέγει, runs as follows:

Ἐγειρε, ὁ καθεύδων
καὶ ἀνάστα ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν (Eph 5.14b)
καὶ ἐπιφαύσει σοὶ ὁ Χριστός.²⁰

On formal and rhythmic grounds Isa 26.19 is undoubtedly closer to Eph 5.14b. The rhythmic pattern *verb + subject, καὶ + verb + subject, καὶ + verb + subject* is common to both. More decisive is the verbal overlap. Both verses employ the verbs ἀνίστημι and

¹⁶ See Barth, *Ephesians*, 574 n81 for references.

¹⁷ Noack, "Zitat", 52ff. Similarly Schmid, *Epheser*, 322 and Schlier, *Epheser*, 240. NA²⁶ also fails to mention any OT parallels. However, UBS lists Isa 26.19; 51.17; 52.1 and 60.1 as possible parallels.

¹⁸ Eadie, *Ephesians*, 387.

¹⁹ Noack, "Zitat", 53. The remaining candidates only overlap with Eph 5.14 via the wake up or stand up concept.

²⁰ There is a weak textual variant (D*; b; Victorinus; Ambrosiaster) which runs ἐπιφαύσεις τοῦ Χριστοῦ ("you will belong to Christ"). In view of the external evidence this is undoubtedly secondary.

ἐγείρω. Common to both texts also is the reference to οἱ νεκροί. The phrase οἱ ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις corresponds to καθεύδων which is best interpreted as a euphemism for death.²¹ Consequently the first and the second line of Eph 5.14b find, albeit in reverse order, close counterparts in a single OT text, although in reverse order. Noack complains that grammatically Isaiah is narrative while Ephesians consists of imperatives. But this is simply evidence of a different genre and cannot be regarded as indicative of a lack of connection between the two texts. There is no reason to suggest that the author of one genre may not have employed and adapted language taken from a writing in a different genre. In other words, the presence of imperatives rather than indicatives in Ephesians could be taken as evidence for the adaptation of originally narrative language to a new exhortatory setting.²²

The first line of the quotation finds its closest OT parallel in Isa 60.1f. While φωτίζου (LXX) does not correspond to ἐγείρε (Ephesians), the latter could be related to the Hebrew יָקִיץ (MT) and may reflect its influence from the latter. If so, ἐγείρε may well have formed the verbal bridge in the NT author's mind between the two Isaianic verses. Both texts fit the context and thrust of the Ephesian passage quite well. This has not usually been acknowledged by scholars. As we saw, Isa 26.19 could have provided the figurative verbal concepts. Ch 60.1f was appropriate because it featured the light-darkness metaphor (59.10 and 60.2f), thus providing a natural point of connection with the co-text of Eph 5.14, that is vv8-14. Furthermore, its reference to YHWH (MT) or κύριος (LXX) clearly offered the possibility for a christological transfer of the type we encounter in Eph 5.14b. Considering that much of early Christian literature including the NT bristles with Isaianic references, it is conceivable that the author of the 'hymn' developed what can be called the 'raw materials' of Isa 26.19 and 60.1f into the little poetic piece we find in v14.

This still leaves the question of how the third line of the quotation could have developed out of Isa 60.1f. It is not difficult to imagine how in early Christianity κύριος came to be changed to Χρίστος.

²¹ Barth, *Ephesians*, 575 n85 gives the following examples: Homer, *Iliad*, 11.241; 14.231; 16.672 and 682; Sophocles, *Electra*, 509; Callimachus, *Epigramma*, 11.2; 1 Kings 2.10; Ps 12.4 LXX; 87.6; Dan 12.2; Sir 46.20; 1 Thes 4.13-15; 5.10; 1 Cor 7.39; 11.30; 15.6,18,20,51; Matt 9.24par; 27.52; John 11.11-3; Acts 7.60; 2 Pet 2.4; Jub 23.1; 36.18; 1 Enoch 49.3; 92.3; 4 Ez 7.32; Pirke Abot 6.10.

²² No one seriously doubts the connection between Ps 68.19 and Eph 4.8 despite the major changes brought about by the NT author.

But an insertion of Χρίστος into material taken originally from the OT is unusual within the NT.²³ This christological transfer from YHWH to Χρίστος may well have taken place prior to the first instances of translating YHWH as κύριος in the NT and in second century LXX manuscripts. It is likely that it was facilitated by the association of YHWH with *light* in texts such as Ps 50.1; 80.1-7,19 and Deut 33.2. Whether this christological transfer originated at an early date within Jewish Christianity is difficult to say.

Regarding ἐπιφάσσει, we must recall that this term is a NT *hapax legomenon*. This raises the question why the author did not prefer the term used in Isa 60.2, φανήσεται. Metrical consideration can be ruled out as there is no difference between the suitability of either term. The main detectable difference is one of intensity. While ἐπιφαίνω has a wider range of meaning including 'being visible' and 'to seem like',²⁴ ἐπιφάσκω is much more powerful and is reserved for descriptions of the shining of the sun (Job 31.26), of the moon (Job 25.5), or of both (Gen 1.15) and for the shining of God's face (Job 41.10 - all LXX). In the Septuagintal use it has overtones of domination. Sunlight dominates day just as the light reflecting from the moon dominates the night. In Job 41.10 God's domination is the focus of attention. In the Acts of Thomas 34 the young man has been liberated from the night of evil by the light which originated with the figure of light and which shone (ἐπιφάσκω) upon him. In each of these cases the verb denotes the dominating, transforming and sustaining activity of a particular source of light.²⁵ Clearly this is also the message of Eph 5.8, a verse which provides the interpretative framework for v14.²⁶ A transformation of the type envisaged above is precisely what the light/darkness metaphor in Eph 5.8-14 is about.²⁷ The term ἐπιφάσκω encapsulates the quintessence of Isa 60: the

²³ For the association of Christ and light in early Christianity see especially Dölger, *Salutis*, 342ff.

²⁴ Bauer, *Wörterbuch*, 1683.

²⁵ This understanding is confirmed by Clement, *Protr*, 9.84.2 where Eph 5.14 is extended by the words "the Lord, the sun of resurrection, born prior to the morning star, he whose own rays of light provide life". Illustration for the combination of Lord, rising upon you, light, healing and liberating from evil is also found in Test Zeb 9.8. Compare Test Lev 18.3f and Mal 4.2 which if taken together read like an elaboration of the concepts encountered in Isa 60.1f, while at the same time providing an illustration for what is encapsulated in the term ἐπιφάσκω. In fact, the whole of Isa 60 is an elaboration of the positive changes brought about by the rising light of Yahweh which does away with darkness (compare notably Isa 60.2 with Test Lev 8.4).

²⁶ This was seen clearly by Dibelius-Greeven, *Epheser*, 90f.

²⁷ See Barth's discussion in *Ephesians*, 598-603.

shining of the light—that is, the glory of the Lord—is such that it brings about wholesale transformation for God's people. There is hardly a verse in Isa 60 which does not derive its significance from this promise. Consequently the third line of the three line hymn could be seen as a summary of the message of Isa 60.1f, which itself sets the parameters and summarises the message of the entire chapter. The poignant term ἐπιφάσκω may well have been chosen in the original hymn to allude to the host of ramifications of the shining light promised in Isa 60.1f. In so doing the hymn reiterated and updated the Prophet's summons to wake up from the dead and to come afresh under the influence of God's light in the middle of the surrounding darkness. The author of Ephesians may have incorporated this hymnic text on the grounds that it captures poignantly what corresponds not only to the ethical thrust of Isa 26.10 and 59.9-17, but also that of Ephesians itself.²⁸

With this in view, we must return to the question: is Eph 5.14b an altered quotation from the OT? Although the majority of commentators answer negatively, the situation is by no means an either/or alternative. On the whole scholars have failed to note that there is a third alternative which meets the requirements of the evidence better than either the 'OT only' option or the 'hymn only' option. This alternative assumes that the author of Ephesians made use of an early Christian hymn which in turn is based on Isa 26 and 60. This makes it possible to do justice both to the introductory formula, on the one hand, and the relative discrepancies between NT text and likely OT *Vorlagen* on the other. The introductory formula refers not to the OT *Vorlagen* but to the hymnic *Vorlage* instead.²⁹ We can also account for the OT links. It is possible that the awakening call preserved in Eph 5.14 was initially inspired by the accumulation of similar calls throughout Isaiah, notably chs 51.9,17; 52.1 and 60.1f, but also 48.1,12; 49.1; 51.1,4; 55.1. While the combination of various Scriptural verses and fragments is not entirely unusual in the NT (cf Eph 6.12ff; Mark 1.2f; Rom 9.33; 11.8-10; 11.34; 1 Cor 15.54f and 2 Cor 9.9), this explanation has the benefit of highlighting the mechanism behind the amalgamation in

²⁸ Arnold, *Powers*, presents a wealth of material illustrating the continuing confrontation of the audience of Ephesians with its surrounding 'darkness'. Within the epistle itself see especially chs 2.9f; 4.1,14,17,22; 5.2,9,15 and 6.10-3.

²⁹ Contra Noack, "Zitat", 55 who argues that the author must have assumed wrongly that the OT itself was the direct source of the quoted text. Noack claims (following Dölger, *Salutis*, 64) that the source of the quotation is more likely to have been either a version of the Apocalypse of Elijah (cf Epiphanius, *Haer*, 42.372) or Sir 24.45.

Eph 5.14. The author was aware that he was not quoting directly from the OT. This can be inferred from the unusual formula διὸ λέγει which he had employed already in ch 4.8 for what has to be regarded as a deliberate deviation of the underlying tradition from the original OT text.³⁰

By way of conclusion attention needs to be drawn to a further example in the epistles of the use of early Christian traditional material which in turn depends on amalgamating OT texts. Selwyn has argued convincingly that 1 Pet 2.4-10 quotes an early Christian hymn *in extenso*.³¹ There the writer appears to quote from Isa 28.16 and 8.14. Both texts have been combined by means of a further quotation from Ps 118.22. Interestingly, the same quotations are combined in Rom 9.23f as well but are not held together by means of Ps 118. Therefore it is highly unlikely that the juxtaposition of the two verses from Isaiah in 1 Peter was borrowed from Romans. At the same time various details common to Romans and 1 Peter deviate from LXX and show that both writers probably drew on a common source other than the OT. The likeliest candidate for this source is an early Christian hymn which itself combined Isa 28.16 with 8.14.³² Whereas 1 Peter provides the hymn *in extenso*, Romans offers just a brief glimpse. The significance of this is that, in addition to Eph 4.8 and 5.14b, we have here a further case in the Pauline corpus of amalgamated Scriptural material being mediated in hymnic form via traditional early Christian poetry. This supports the case put forward above, but it also raises form-critical questions which must be addressed.

THE FORM-CRITICAL PROBLEM OF EPH 5.14

It has already been indicated that in the wake of form-criticism a number scholars have attempted to pin down the *genre* and the *Sitz im Leben* of Eph 5.14. Schille was the first to call it a *Weckruf* or 'awakening call'.³³ Subsequently the majority of exegetes attempted to locate the *Sitz* more precisely. In the light of the relevant mandaic literature Pokorny sought to interpret the first line of the hymn as the

³⁰ Cf above chapter four.

³¹ Selwyn, *1 Peter*, 286-81.

³² Caird, *Age*, 115.

³³ Schille, *Hymn*, 95f. Deichgräber, *Gottes hymnus*, 22 followed Schille and so did Lindemann, *Aufhebung*, 234f. See also Fischer, *Tendenz*, 142 who argues that the hymn reflects an awakening call of the mystery religions. Cf Pokorny, "Epheserbrief", 170.

words which accompanied the newly baptised as he or she stood up from the water.³⁴ Fischer speaks for most: "The only conceivable situation of these metaphorical imperatives is baptism."³⁵ Schnackenburg sees support for this view in the baptismal texts of the Syrian Didaskale 21 where the Jewish Christians are told that they saw the great light, Jesus Christ. Gentile Christians are told that a great light rose above them.³⁶ Fischer draws attention to Eph 2.4-7 which he calls a "baptismal prayer... in which baptism is understood as resurrection from death."³⁷ Schille draws support from the later additions to the text of Eph 5.14 by Clement of Alexandria.³⁸ Such a 'baptismal' interpretation could also conceivably be based on the phrase ἀνάστα ἐκ τῶν νεκρῶν. However, the terminology and concept can be paralleled in Isa 26.19 and must therefore not be pressed.

Despite support for the 'baptismal interpretation', it is doubtful whether the search for such a particular *Sitz* does justice to this text. Discussing the function of a given text in its present co-text is not the

³⁴ Pokorny, *Gnosis*, 120.

³⁵ Fischer, *Tendenz*, 141.

³⁶ Schnackenburg, *Ephesians*, 234. Rom 6.3f is also regularly cited in support of this view (eg Gnllka, *Epheser*, 260). Bruce, *Ephesians*, 377 sees in Eph 5.14b "a call to the readers to remember their baptism and its significance, just as in Rom 6.3-4." Lona, *Eschatologie*, 357 even argues that Eph 5.14 has an emphasis on the baptismal "Ritus" (see also p360).

³⁷ Fischer, *Tendenz*, 141. Similarly Pokorny, "Epheserbief", 186 who adds Col 2.11; Gal 3.27; 2 Cor 5.17; Eph 1.13 and 4.30. However, only the first two of these texts can be shown to have baptism in mind. Pokorny, *Gnosis*, 186-8 is in danger of reading these explicit statements as well as mandaic baptismal liturgies back into Ephesians. Significant differences are ignored. Thus the lack of explicit mention of baptism in Ephesians is ignored and the fact that Ephesians heavily and demonstrably draws on OT traditions is relegated to a footnote (188 n257). Pokorny seeks support from Dibelius who, in his view, "showed that Eph 5.14 is by no means a quotation from Jewish literature" (187 n240). However, in reality Dibelius postulates only in passing that the origin of the quotation is "probably not to be sought among the Jewish literature" (*Epheser*, 90). For the relevant gnostic parallels see Schille's discussion (*Hymnen*, 96-8). The apparently closest parallel to Eph 5.14b within the body of Greek mystery religious literature is found in Arist Ran 340ff: „Wach auf! Brennende Fackel in Händen nämlich bist du da, Jakchos, o Jakchos! Der nächtlichen Weihe lichtbringender Stern“ (quotation from Schille, *Hymnen*, 96). Gnllka, *Epheser*, 262 rightly objects to this parallel for "the text is still so remote that it should not be called a parallel at all." It is this lack of close enough parallels which hampers Pokorny's attempt to relate Ephesians to the texts of gnostic mystery religions. Owing to this lack of evidence Pokorny's analysis consists of various twenty page discussions of postulated gnostic parallels (for example pp160-80), rather than elaborating the precise points of overlap which he assumes.

³⁸ Schille, *Hymnen*, 95.

same as examining a hypothetical traditional-historical provenance. Assuming we are in a position to determine confidently the original *Sitz*, we would still have to establish the extent of continuity between this *Sitz* and the function of the piece within the context of Eph 5. Irrespective of these difficulties, scholars have often tended to relate an assumed *Sitz im Leben* rather directly to the literary and theological function of this three line hymn in Eph 5.14b. This approach is justifiable only if it can be assumed that both the NT author and the intended audience were aware of the original setting of the traditional material.

If, for the sake of the argument, we assume that the function of the three line hymn in the context of Eph 5.14 can be determined by its alleged original baptismal setting, might not the same be said of the relationship between the hymn and the text of Isaiah? If so, we would have to take seriously the ethical setting of the Isaianic material employed in the hymn. If, as is more likely, the answer is no, why should the alleged baptismal background of the hymn be allowed to determine its function in the co-text of Ephesians? Methodologically the question of the religious function of the hymn in early Christianity needs to be distinguished from the co-textual interpretation of Eph 5.14. In short, regardless of whether the hymn was used at baptismal festivities, the author of Ephesians could well have used the hymn to make an entirely different point.

What reasons, other than the theoretical suitability of the wording of the hymn for the occasion of baptism, are there for carrying an alleged baptismal setting of the hymn into the text of Eph 5? There is no real evidence within Ephesians that the author was remotely interested in baptismal celebrations. There are passages in the letter where the author could have linked his christological (ch 2.4-6) and ecclesiological (5.26) discourses with baptism, but failed to do so. In contrast to the Colossians parallel, the gist of ch 2.4-6 is the superiority of those who are in Christ over the opposing and dominating evil powers of the surrounding cults. While the Colossian parallel (ch 2.12f) speaks unequivocally of baptism this must not be read into Ephesians. Eph 2 speaks of the believer's co-resurrection with Christ, not his burial in baptism. Ch 5.26 is more likely to be influenced by Jewish betrothal language than by baptismal considerations. The only mention of baptism in the entire epistle occurs in ch 4.5. It is telling that baptism is the only item in this list of 'oneness' terms which the author fails to elaborate on elsewhere in the letter. Lastly, it is noteworthy that in ch 2.13-17, when discussing the relationship of Jewish and gentile believers in Christ, the two are

not said to have been baptised into the same body, but instead to have been reconciled and created as one new man by Christ on the cross. Even the preceding discussion of circumcision fails to allude to baptism. The Colossian parallel, on the other hand, makes the link with baptism quite explicit (2.11f). The evidence within Ephesians points clearly in the direction of general parenetic admonition, not baptismal instruction.³⁹ The author is concerned with matters of Jewish-gentile unity (ch 2.11ff), local Christian community life and individual ethics (4.1 - 5.20), household codes (5.22-6.9) and the obligation and ability to withstand the evil powers (6.10-17). In each of these sections he draws freely on OT material with the purpose of demonstrating the validity of his claims and the compatibility of new covenant morality with Scriptural ethics. The likelihood is that the same applies to ch 5.14b, the difference being that his recourse to the OT is not direct but via an early Christian hymnic tradition which promoted Christian ethical responsibility with the help of appropriate OT language. Whether or not this tradition emerged from a baptismal setting is impossible to say.

There remains one further flaw in the traditional approach: the term *baptismal* is not necessarily synonymous with the phrase *at someone's conversion*. It may be conceded that the first line of the hymn may refer to a pre-conversion "sleep" (καθεύδων - present), the second line to the fundamental turn-around at conversion (ἀνάστα - aorist) and the third line to the ongoing "walk"

³⁹ In favour of detecting baptismal notions in Eph 5.14 commentators sometimes note the alleged parallel with Rom 6.3ff, a text which speaks explicitly of baptism. This is of course precisely one of the differences between these texts. Perhaps more fundamental is the observation that within Romans and even 1 Thes much more suitable texts for comparison with Eph 5.8-14 are 1 Thes 5.4-11 and Rom 13.11-13. The points of contact with Eph 5 are as follows: (1) The common use of the sleeping metaphor for the ethically and eschatologically unfit state of believers. (2) The illustration of spiritual realities by means of the *light/darkness* metaphor. (3) The stress on putting on Christ and specific weapons of light in order to resist evil. (4) The vice lists in Rom 13.13 and Eph 5.2-5 overlap at various points. (5) Romans and Ephesians also agree in admonishing the readers to conduct their lives properly (περιπατεῖν). (6) All three passages point to the responsibility believers within a congregation have for each other. Apart from the conduct of life, Rom 6.3ff has none of these points in common with these texts. The link between these texts and Ephesians is much closer than that between Rom 6 and Eph 5.14. Both texts agree with Ephesians furthermore in that they focus on the eschatological significance of the present. They are not concerned with the experience of baptism. Rom 13.11 even distinguishes explicitly between the coming to faith of believers in the past and the importance of wakefulness in the present. All of the texts mentioned are concerned with the ethics of the present. The baptismal reference of Rom 6.3ff should therefore not be read back into Eph 5.14.

(περιπατεῖτε - v15) under the influence of Christ, the light (ἐπιφάσκει). However, to remind the addressees of the difference in ethical outlook before and after conversion is not necessarily the same as to direct them back to the event of baptism. While the author could have brought out such baptismal elements, he refrains from doing so.⁴⁰

Whatever the original *Sitz* of the underlying 'hymn', the argument of Eph 5.8-14, including the quotation under investigation, is not baptismal, but concerned generally with ethics. Baptismal references in other texts and an alleged baptismal *Sitz im Leben* must not be confused with the text of Ephesians itself.⁴¹ If the second line of the three line hymn originally referred to the conversion of believers, we would nevertheless have to conclude that the author of Ephesians refrains from exploiting this in baptismal terms.

EVIDENCE FROM QUMRAN

As early as in 1957/8 Rigaux pointed out a number of similarities between Ephesians and the Qumran writings.⁴² This was followed by Kuhn's more detailed study.⁴³ Ch 5.14b is one of the main passages examined for this purpose. Kuhn suggests the following as a summary rendering of the verse: "Have done with sinning, let your

⁴⁰ Similar in ch 2.5f. The language of the second line ought primarily to be explained as being dependent on Isa 26.19.

⁴¹ An interesting example of differing scholarly method and approaches to the interpretation of a traditional hymnic piece within the Pauline corpus is Phil 2.6-11. Until approximately 30 years ago the ethical interpretation of this text was almost universally accepted. It was subsequently attacked severely by Käsemann, "Analyse", whose criticisms were reinforced by Martin in his extensive study *Carmen Christi*. Martin insists that the hymnic material is to be taken on its own rather than as applied in the context of Phil 2. Stanton, *Jesus*, comments that on this premise it becomes more and more difficult to adopt the ethical interpretation. In any case, Martin's methodology is questionable at this point. The primary question is not that of the original meaning of the hymn before its incorporation by Paul, but how the latter applied it in its new context. Redaction criticism by definition makes a distinction between *Vorlage* and end product. This must not be blurred by the fact that occasionally the discrepancy between the two is minimal. This is not to deny the importance of the secondary aim of sometimes being able to trace continuities between *Vorlage* and NT text. Indeed, much of the present study pursues such lines of continuity. Yet, on the level of methodology the above mentioned distinction is vital in order to avoid pitfalls of the kind encountered for instance in pre-critical gospel study which majored on harmonisation attempts without much regard for redactional peculiarities.

⁴² Rigaux, "Revelation", 237-63, notably 256f.

⁴³ K. Kuhn, "Ephesians", 115-31.

transgressions be brought to light; thereby you will become a Son of Light or, as the song says, Christ will rise up in light before thee."⁴⁴ Kuhn gives more weight to ethics than is traditional. While he does not deny the possibility of a baptismal understanding of the hymn in its original setting, he is rightly more concerned with the Ephesian context.⁴⁵ He goes on to ask whether the evidence from Qumran underpins his 'ethical' understanding.⁴⁶ Kuhn observes that the motives of *sleep* and *dying in sin* are expressions for one and the same thing, both having a primarily ethical thrust. The call is not to a new understanding of the self—as in gnostic traditions—but to a decision of will and a resulting change in one's behaviour.⁴⁷ This coheres with the function of περιπατεῖν in Eph 2.2,10; 4.1,8,17(2x) and 5.1,9,15. It also coheres with the ethical qualification of the believer's state of having risen from death in Christ (ch 2.5) in antithesis to the previous state of transgressions (cf also Rom 6.10-13). This picture is essentially confirmed by 1QH 3.19-22.⁴⁸

A further significant point raised by Kuhn involves the phrases ἐλεγχόμενα and φανεροῦται (Eph 5.13). Kuhn detects a major parallel in CD 20.3f: יִכְיִירוּ נָשִׁי ... בְּרוֹפֵעַ מַעֲשָׁיו which translates as "when his deeds become revealed, ... the men shall rebuke him". Kuhn appears to imply that the Hebrew בְּרוֹפֵעַ parallels ἐπιφάσκω (Eph 5.14). However, when the OT speaks of the shining of YHWH, LXX does not translate יָפַע by ἐπιφάσκω. In order to use יָפַע for elucidating ἐπιφάσκω, better support is needed.

I noted above that ἐπιφάσκειν usually implies some element of a dominating, sustaining, transforming or even threatening power. Qumran parallels include: the rising sun and moon (1QS 10.2); the

⁴⁴ Ibid, 125.

⁴⁵ Consequently he criticises Dibelius-Greeven for unnecessarily positing a break between the quotation and the verses preceding it and instead linking it with v8 (*Epheser*, 90).

⁴⁶ Cf 1QH 3.19-22. But see also Pss Sol 16.1-4 which focuses sharply on the state of sleep of him who drifted away from God and who, like the sinner, came close to hades; but then God's mercy "jabbed him like a horse" in order to keep him on the right path (cf the Ephesian awakening call).

⁴⁷ Kuhn, "Ephesians", 127.

⁴⁸ Vv20f are especially important in that they combine references to the conduct of life (cf περιπατεῖν in Eph) with the cleansing from evil deeds. 1QH 3 offers according to Kuhn further insights concerning the third line of the Ephesian three line hymn. He argues that 1QH 3.22 mentions explicitly the inclusion of sinners into the exclusive salvation-community and that this presents a parallel to Ephesians. However, the stress falls on the contrast between the two spheres of light and darkness, not on the exclusive character of the salvation-community. The argument is primarily ethical, not ecclesiological.

rising of enemies (1QH 5.32; 7.3), and the rising of the wicked priest against the teacher of righteousness (1QpHab 11.7). CD 20.25f testifies to God's eschatological appearance for the purpose of judging the trespassers of the Law (cf 1QH 4.5f,23). Two observations emerge from these texts: they all employ the verb עָנַן and the focus in most of them is not on the salvation of members of an exclusive community, but on the judgment of sinners. This second point also applies to Eph 5.14 (cf v6). Hence there is a strong case for placing the main emphasis on the sons of disobedience and on the present and future struggle against the forces of evil. Any thoughts of rites of passage, such as baptism, are at best secondary.

In conclusion the following four points emerge. First, the relevant Qumran parallels to Eph 5.14 support the assumption that the latter should not be regarded as primarily, or even at all, concerned with baptism. The focus in the comparative texts is not on community membership but on ongoing ethical responsibility. Second, Kuhn's overall understanding of Eph 5.14 as an ethical statement concerned with Christian behaviour remains valid.⁴⁹ Third, and in contrast to Kuhn's position,⁵⁰ the addressees of the awakening call are to be found in the τέκνα ἀγαπητά, not the υἱοί τῆς ἀπειθείας. Hence they can be admonished to ἐν κυρίῳ ἀξίως περιπατῆσαι τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ἐκλήθητε (4.1). Fourth, this examination of Qumran texts confirms the result of my study of the two closest OT parallels to Eph 5.14, that is that the material underlying the early Christian hymn has been used with a primarily ethical thrust.

RABBINIC EVIDENCE

In view of the specific links between the hymn quoted and Isa 26.19 as well as 60.1f, it may prove fruitful to review the use of these texts in the body of rabbinic literature. It may be possible to establish a pattern in the rabbinic employment of these texts which throws light on their possible use in NT times.⁵¹ The former of these texts appears four times in the Talmud (Ket 111a and b; San 90a; Sot 5a) and three times in the Midrashim (Exod 2.2; Eccles 1.7; Ps 1). In five of these seven cases the Biblical text is rephrased in general terms. More pertinent is Ket 111b which argues that the Torah is the light which

⁴⁹ It is regrettable that Fischer, *Tendenz*, 141 n102 and Gnllka, *Epheser*, 258 n6 among others have relegated Kuhn's study to a footnote.

⁵⁰ Kuhn, "Ephesians", 131.

⁵¹ Methodologically this will only be possible if such patterns can be paralleled in at least some earlier texts dating from around the first century AD.

brings the dead back to life. MREccles 1.7 links the awakening and coming back to life of dead bodies to the messianic age to come. Isa 60.1f is quoted in part or in full twenty-three times. In some instances the light mentioned in Isa 60.1f is thought to denote the Torah which was despised by the heathens (MRExod 6.6; P^esiqR; MRPs 119.34). V2 is furthermore applied to the Torah in a Baraita in MRLev 6.6 (11a). It is worth quoting this text in full:

Of the heathen nations who did not accept the Torah which was given out of the midst of the darkness, Scripture says, 'For behold darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples'; but as for Israel which did accept the Torah which was given out of the midst of darkness - of them Scripture says, 'But upon you, the Lord will rise, and his glory will be upon you'.

Clearly this theme is not restricted to the later rabbinic literature. In Wis 18.4 (cf BB 4a) the giving of the light to Israel is related directly to the Law-giving on Mt. Sinai. The same is true of 4 Ezra 14.20f where it is argued that the world is without God's light, that is the Torah.⁵² The list could be extended (Lev 14.3; 19.1; MRExod 36.3; Ps 119.105; 2 Bar 17.4; 18.1f; 46.2f; 59.2 and 77.13f).⁵³ In at least ten further instances the light mentioned in Isa 60.1f is related to the coming messianic age (San 99a; MRPs 22.11; P^esiqR 8.4; 36.1; 36.2 (2x); 53.2; MRExod 14.3; MRNum 15.2; MRGen 2.5).⁵⁴

This survey shows that in two thirds of the instances where either Isa 26.19 or 60.1f is quoted or alluded to deliberately, a messianic or Torah-related understanding of these texts is presupposed. As the evidence from the pseudepigraphical works cited above points in the same direction, it is plausible to assume that the rabbinic data reflects attitudes and interpretations prevalent significantly earlier than the final editing of these writings. These findings may be interpreted cautiously as suggesting that the hymn underlying Eph 5.14b drew on Isa 26 and 60 precisely because of their relevance for first century Jewish messianic and Torah-related speculation. That in turn may have prompted the author of Ephesians to quote the hymn in order to express succinctly what has in effect been a major message throughout the epistle: *Christ's supremacy is beyond the reach of the 'powers'—who are in principle defeated (ch 1.21f)—and the Torah—which has been removed through the cross (ch 2.13-17).*⁵⁵

⁵² Charlesworth, *Pseudepigrapha*, 554.

⁵³ For further discussion see Lövestam, *Wakefulness*, 12f.

⁵⁴ See possibly also MRExod 15.27; MRNum 21.22 and MRPs 27.1 (2x).

⁵⁵ It is worth pointing out that Paul was no doubt aware of the frequent application of the light metaphor to the Torah (Rom 2.17-19). Rom 2 argues that

EPH 5.8-14 - THE FLOW OF THOUGHT

It is worth noting that v14a, which immediately precedes the quotation, presents the only major interpretative problem of vv8-14. It appears to involve a paradox: vv11-13 assert that what is shameful is being revealed by the light, but v14a appears to say that what is being revealed is itself light.⁵⁶ To point to the following quotation as a possible cause of this difficulty would be to restate, not solve, the problem.

The interpretative framework for understanding this seeming rupture may be found in vv8 and 13. Believers used to be darkness, but now they have become light through/in the Lord (v8). V13 speaks of a process of being illumined by the light.⁵⁷ The picture is that of igniting a light in a dark room containing shameful things. The cover had been removed (πάντα ἐλεγχόμενα) and immediately these shameful things are being illumined by the light.⁵⁸ Surprisingly v14a appears to argue that these shameful things are themselves being turned into light by way of this process.⁵⁹ However, an object exposed to the light does not itself turn into light. It becomes light only in the sense that it reflects light as long as it remains in the

despite the Law there is no difference between Jew and gentile (cf 3.9). Both are in need of Christ (v22) who is the real light (cf also 1 John 1.5). Eph 2.11ff and 5.8-14 are essentially compatible with—although not nearly as explicit as—this line of reasoning presented in Rom 2. While ch 5.8ff would in isolation not necessarily have to be interpreted along these lines, ch 2.11ff and, as we saw above, ch 4.8-10 suggest that the author was concerned with what was possibly an underlying debate about the exclusive identity of the true light. This has cautiously been confirmed by the study of the literary and theological background and *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the texts underlying the hymn quoted in ch 5.14b.

⁵⁶ Calvin's solution—"Lux est... quae omnia manifestat"—which is followed by the NIV translation—"...for it is light that makes everything possible"—is rightly criticised by Barth, *Ephesians*, 579 n78: (1) φανερούμενον is not active but either passive or middle voice. (2) φῶς is unlikely to form the subject of the sentence. (3) πᾶν is not likely to form the object of φανερούμενον. Rather, πᾶν + φανερούμενον should be seen together as forming the sentence subject. The decision as to whether φανερούμενον should be construed as a middle or passive is difficult. On balance the latter is to be preferred. Its use in the middle voice would be unique in the NT. Also the phrase would then fail to add anything significant to v13 (Robinson, *Ephesians*, 201).

⁵⁷ Pace the translation "to the light" preferred by the REB translators.

⁵⁸ The prepositional phrase could go either with ἐλεγχόμενα or φανεροῦται, but is perhaps best taken with the latter.

⁵⁹ Cf Lincoln's rendering (*Ephesians*, 316): "for everything that becomes illumined is light". However, if this is so, the question arises how the statement that "everything that becomes illumined is light" can support (γάρ) the previous statement that "everything exposed becomes illumined by the light".

light's sphere of influence. While this idea which is compatible with v8—Christ's followers are light not in themselves but by virtue of being in Christ—offers a potential solution, it also involves a measure of 'eisegesis' which should, if possible, be avoided.

Strictly speaking the author distinguishes between the act of exposing and the process of illumination. The former is done by the believers themselves (v11), while Christ is the agent of the latter (v14). In fact, the former is only meaningful if supplemented by the latter (v13). This is the main thrust of the phrase ὑπὸ τοῦ φωτός. In other words, in order for something to be exposed properly, this will have to occur in the domain of Christ. It follows that the hymn was chosen to underline the distinctive nature of ethical exposure which derives its motivation from Christ's transforming power. The distinction is between general morality and christologically motivated morality. Only the latter will lead to real transformation (v14). Such transformation leads to continuous exposure to Christ's light (v14b). Vv15ff elaborate on the practical implications of this, the introductory key term (περιπατεῖτε) being one which appears repeatedly at crucial points in the author's argument, particularly to introduce or bracket parenetical sections.⁶⁰

It could be argued that the flow of thought would have been significantly improved if v14a had been omitted. But the writer was interested in highlighting Christ as the centre of the spiral which can be expressed as follows: what is shameful is being exposed by those who are in Christ and at the same time shone upon by Christ, the light and thus revealed. He who is illumined by the true light in this way will continue to be shone upon by Christ, thus being equipped to expose further shameful things. A similar pattern, this time from the point of view of believers, is detectable in chs 2.1ff and 4.17ff: *the darkness of the past - the work and achievement of Christ - the ongoing light of the present - admonition to proper ethical conduct*. Ultimately it is the author's sharp christological focus in this discussion of morality that caused him, perhaps somewhat clumsily, to restate in v14a the emphasis on the light in v13, thus leading into the more explicitly christological confession of v14b.

This understanding presupposes to some extent that v14 (πάν γάρ) connects with v13 consecutively, not causally. This may seem unusual. However, there are numerous instances in the Pauline letters where γάρ can hardly be taken causally and where a consecutive

⁶⁰ Eph 2.1,10; 4.1,17; 5.2,8,15.

understanding better fits the syntactical requirement.⁶¹ There are also a number of cases in the history of the textual transmission of the NT where later versions replaced δέ for a γάρ which had no apparent causal meaning.⁶² Within the NT, the consecutive use of γάρ is restricted to Paul's letters. It is on the basis of these observations that the flow of vv13f can be elucidated in the way I have proposed.

CONCLUSION

Eph 5.14b preserves an early Christian hymn which in turn is heavily influenced by the wording of Isa 26.19 and 60.1f. While it is highly likely that the hymn alluded to the conversion aspect in a believer's life, there is nothing to suggest that the author of Ephesians was interested in any baptismal overtones it may or may not have had. The writer had a particular interest in the hymn's suitability for bringing out his concept of what could be called the double exposure of what is shameful: believers expose shameful things, Christ provides the light needed to reveal them. The former of these components is reflected in the hymn's two imperatives: Ἐγείρε and ἀνάστα. The latter finds expression in the phrase ἐπιφάσκει σοι ὁ Χριστός. A likely third reason for quoting the three line hymn is the degree of conceptual overlap between the OT texts alluded to in the hymn and the author's own interest in highlighting ethical issues arising from a religious commitment. This underlines further that the main thrust of the quotation was not baptismal, but simply to remind the readers that the past is best left behind and that they must continue to expose themselves to the light of Christ. In practical terms this works two ways: it involves a degree of personal morality to be matched by the willingness to uncover whatever is found to be shameful. Thus we find in Eph 5.14 a personal as well as a social dimension.

It is possible though not certain that the choice of the hymn also had to do with the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the two underlying OT texts. In the majority of rabbinic and pseudepigraphic texts which quote or allude to these verses, the light concept is understood to refer either to messianic times or to the supreme significance of the Torah. It cannot be ruled out, therefore, that the writer of Ephesians

⁶¹ Zerwick, *Greek*, 473 lists among others Rom 1.18; 12.3; 14.5; and 1 Cor 10.1. To this list I would add Eph 5.14a.

⁶² Ibid. Bauer, *Wörterbuch*, 302 also points to the grammarian Trypho of Alexandria who argued that γάρ is often "one and the same thing as δέ".

uses the hymn as an assertion of Christ's superiority over the Jewish Torah. What can be affirmed more confidently is that the author has given a striking christological interpretation to a Jewish Scriptural tradition which had left its mark on early Christianity prior to the writing of this epistle.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE QUOTATION FROM GENESIS 2.24 IN EPHESIANS 5.31

"This is why a man shall leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

This extended quotation concludes the first major part of the Ephesian household code,¹ that is the section commenting on the husband-wife relationship. Considering the relatively negative attitude the author has adopted towards the Jewish Torah in ch 2.13-17, it comes as a slight surprise to find him basing the essence of human marriage on a quotation from the Pentateuch. This apparent tension urges us to examine closely the theological rationale behind this quotation. In doing so we are in the fortunate position of assuming with a good deal of probability that Eph 5.31 here follows the Septuagint.²

¹ There is some uncertainty as to the length of the original quotation. An alternative longer reading which includes Gen 2.23 was first omitted by Lachmann and in the second edition of Tischendorf; the latter included it again in his seventh edition (Ellicott, *Ephesians*, 134). Ellicott also retains the longer reading despite the *lectio brevior* principle and the discovery of the Codex Sinaiticus. This is refuted convincingly by Abbott, *Ephesians*, 172. In fairness to Ellicott it must be admitted that D—one of the main witnesses for the longer reading—is known to include many expansions and abbreviations, thus rendering the *lectio brevior* principle less useful. However, the longer reading may well have resulted from a desire to rebut docetic tendencies (Gnilka, *Epheser*, 286 and Schlier, *Epheser*, 261). Moreover, the Ephesian passage as a whole develops the analogy between the relationship within human marriage and that between the church and Christ. Hence, if the longer reading is retained, Abbott asks wryly (172), "what relation is suggested by the bones of Christ?" In any case, it would be difficult to reconstruct a possible motif for omitting the quotation from Gen 2.23 had it been original. External considerations would also favour the shorter reading. The 246 strong witness of $\aleph$, A, B and p⁴⁶ is further supported by the very important minuscules 33, 81 and 1739. Thus the following examination will be based on the shorter text.

² This is clear from the following observation. While the author of Ephesians clearly and correctly distinguishes between the use of *ἄνθρωπος* and *ἄνθρω* elsewhere (2.15; 4.13,20,24; 5.22-25,28,33), he nevertheless follows the LXX rendering *ἄνθρωπος*—cf the Hebrew *אָדָם*—rather than *ἄνθρω* which would have been a better rendering of the Hebrew *אָדָם* (cf Barth, *Ephesians*, 720 n424). Consequently have only to attempt to explain the change from *ἀντί* to *ἐνεκεν*. Apart

It is quite conceivable that the author of Ephesians felt compelled to set out his own understanding and application of Gen 2.24 (cf ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω - v32) against competing interpretations with which he disagreed and which may have led to misconceptions among the addressees. It should prove profitable to set Eph 5.31f against the background of contemporary debates about marriage and divorce. In doing so the focus will be on extra-Biblical texts as well as on NT parallels in which Gen 2.24 has been quoted either in part or in full (Mark 10.7/Matt 19.5; 1 Cor 6.16).

A further area of interest is in the overall thrust of Eph 5.21-33 which is concluded by the quotation and its accompanying interpretation. The question is whether the emphasis falls on human marriage or on the Christ-church relationship. Which of the two serves as illustration for the other? While some argue that the passage is primarily about the roots of human marriage in the Christ-church relationship,³ others see the Christ-church relationship as being at the heart of the text, with human marriage merely serving as an appropriate analogy.⁴ We shall see that much hinges on the precise function of the numerous comparative particles ὥς, καθὼς, and οὕτως (vv22,23,24,25,28[2x],29).

These considerations will set the scene for the decisive hermeneutical considerations. Should ἀντὶ τούτου be regarded as an introductory formula providing a causal link with what precedes the quotation, or is it part of the quotation itself? Is it appropriate to take into account the underlying OT text itself for interpreting Ephesians, or is there an unbridgeable gap between OT thrust and NT application? Does the author engage in allegorical or typological interpretation, or was he mainly interested in showing ethical continuity between the old and the new covenants? Possible answers to such questions will be developed under the following headings:

The Significance of Genesis 2.24 for Interpreting Ephesians 5.31f
Genesis 2.24 and Marriage in Jewish Sources and the New Testament
Marriage and Divorce in the Qumran Writings

from this deviation from LXX one might mention the insignificant omission of the possessive pronoun behind μητέρα and πατέρα which does not affect interpretation—cf Matt 19.5: no possessive pronoun - Mark 10.7: includes a possessive pronoun; similarly Philo, who on one occasion includes the pronoun when quoting from Gen 2.24 [*Alleg* II, 49], but shortly thereafter [51] he omits both pronouns.

³ Stoeckhard, *Ephesians*, 247 and Abbott, *Ephesians*, 174.

⁴ Batey, "Mia Sarx", 270 and Conzelmann, *Epheser*, 270.

- Genesis 2.24 in Philo's Writings
- The One Flesh Union in Gnostic Texts
- Rabbinic Texts on Marriage and Divorce
- Genesis 2.24 and the New Testament
- Conclusion
- The Train of Thought of Ephesians 5.21-33
- Hermeneutics and Theology in Ephesians 5.31 - A Fresh Look
 - The Grammatical Antecedent and the Rationale of vv30-32
 - Jewish and Pauline Adam Speculation?
 - The Nature and Referent of the Mystery
 - ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω - Polemical Overtones?
 - ἀγαπάτω ὡς ἑαυτόν - Further Old Testament Reminiscences?
 - Ephesians 5 and the ἱερός γάμος Concept
- Conclusion

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GENESIS 2.24 FOR INTERPRETING EPH 5.31F

Given the observation made above that Eph 5.31 carefully quotes its OT source, it would seem plausible to turn to the OT text itself for interpretative clues. The author has not only shown that he is keenly aware of the Jewish history of interpretation of some of the OT texts appropriated, notably ch 4.8-10, but that like his contemporaries or predecessors he could also exploit the actual wording of the OT text. We must acknowledge that, depending on their audience, first century Christian writers could presuppose the original context and co-text of the text quoted, rather than having to reiterate it. A classic example of this is found in 1 Cor 10.7: "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose to play." Taken in isolation this quotation seems to do little to support Paul's warning against idolatry. It is only when the golden calf co-text—which is not spelt out by Paul—is taken into account that the quotation becomes meaningful.⁵ This should warn us not to discount the relevance of the OT text *per se*. I propose to review the place and significance of Gen 2.24 in the early chapters of Genesis. On that basis we can ascertain what caused the author to quote this particular verse.

Genesis opens with the creation account and the blessing of creation (Gen 1.1 - 2.3). Ch 2.4-25 focuses more specifically on the creation of Adam and the environment in which he found himself. As no suitable partner could be found for Adam, God decided to create woman from Adam's rib (vv20-2) and gave her to him. He greeted

⁵ For further examples involving Paul's use of the early chapters of Genesis see Stanley, "Interest", 241-52.

her saying "bones from my bone and flesh from my flesh" (v23). This is followed by the verse quoted in Ephesians: "That is why a man leaves his father and mother and attaches himself to his wife, and the two become one." The section is concluded by the mention of Adam's and Eve's nakedness and the fact that they felt no shame (v25). However, only seven verses later this is reversed by stating that the Fall led to their feeling ashamed at their nakedness (3.7). In ch 3.16 God's verdict that the man should rule over the woman qualifies the earlier statement that man "shall attach himself to his wife" (v24). Thus we see that vv24f form part of a bracket around the story of the Fall, thus pointing to the severity of its consequences.⁶

It has been debated whether v24 still belongs to Adam's greeting of the woman. Most commentators rightly reject this possibility.⁷ The narrative is complete without v24. The verse should neither be seen as Adam's prophecy of human marriage and parenthood, nor be classified as an aetiology with the purpose of explaining the powerful attraction of the sexes.⁸ It is best seen as a narrative aside with the aim of setting the background for the following account of the Fall. As vv7,16 show, the narrator was concerned to highlight the contrast between God's will for the man and the woman and the actual outcome of their choice to disobey God. The verse looks back to and to some extent interprets the preceding verse—compare the word play אִשָּׁה - אִישׁ in both verses. This in itself does not make it aetiological. It is a speciality of Genesis to include numerous parenthetical asides similar to this verse.⁹ Each of these asides is introduced by the same formula עַל־כֵּן,¹⁰ alerting the reader to the fact that the narrator is breaking into the narrative in order to interpret his source. In the present instance this is underlined by the change from the past tense to יַעֲשֶׂה which indicates the customary action of man and woman. V25 then resumes in the past tense. Having established

⁶ Cf Lawton, "Trite", 98.

⁷ Leupold, *Genesis*, 137; von Rad, *Genesis*, 84; Cassuto, *Genesis* I, 136 and Westermann, *Genesis* I, 317.

⁸ Pace von Rad, *Genesis*, 85. Alternatively the verse could be construed with Lawton, "Trite", 97f as follows: "therefore a man should/was to leave father and mother and cling to his wife, and they should/were to become one flesh", thus resulting in a statement of divine intent rather than natural attraction. Whether as Schrage, *Ethik*, 236 claims this holds true of the Ephesians context as well will have to be examined at a later stage. Given the unusual fact—by ancient standards—that the husband is said to leave his parents, rather than the wife leaving hers, the writer is probably concerned with natural drive (von Rad, 85).

⁹ Compare for instance chs 10.9; 26.33; 32.32.

¹⁰ This is usually translated in the LXX as ἔνεκεν τούτου, "therefore".

the narrative function of this aside we may have uncovered a clue to the use of this particular verse by the author of Ephesians. Undoubtedly part of the reason for selecting this verse has been the fact that it nicely summarises the theological thrust of the preceding passage.

What is the precise theological significance of Gen 2.24? Westermann correctly argues that sexual desire is not the only nor the most important feature of marriage as encountered it in the OT.¹¹ Family ties as well as social and economic factors also exercised a determinative force. On the basis of these observations he goes on to show that any interpretation of the phrase in purely sexual terms "attaches to his wife" is too narrow. "The main significance of this verse lies precisely in that it differs from current conceptions by pointing to the inherent strength of the love bond between husband and wife." The verse should not be 'institutionalised' anachronistically.¹² Yet, we cannot fail to note that the narrator firmly roots human marriage in God's order of creation.

Having examined the narrative and theological significance of Gen 2.24 in its original context, I shall sketch the relevance of this verse to teaching on marriage throughout various strands of Judaism.

GENESIS 2.24 AND MARRIAGE IN JEWISH SOURCES AND IN THE NT

The main sources to consider here include the Qumran writings, Philo's use of Gen 2.24, some gnostic sources as well as the rabbinic literature.¹³

¹¹ Westermann, *Genesis* I, 317.

¹² Ibid, 318.

¹³ Despite Sampley's attempts to establish a traditional pattern underlying Ephesians at this point which could then be related to various apocryphal writings, I will not include 1 Esdras 4.13-25 and Sir 13.15f in this chapter. The similarities he discovers are too vague to be significant (Sampley, *Flesh*, 58f.). In the case of Sirach it is not possible to demonstrate with a reasonable degree of certainty that the author combined Gen 2.24 with Lev 19.18, as Sampley claims. It would have been counter-productive for the writer of Sirach to combine these two Scriptures. He stressed the fact that certain people stay away from others on the grounds of difference in social and economic status; however the thrust of Lev 19.18 is clearly opposite to this notion. It is equally doubtful that Sirach deliberately built its argument on Gen 2.24. While both texts feature the term προσκολληθήσεται combined with σάρξ, the latter functions as the subject of the former in Sirach, but denotes the result of the action expressed by the predicate in Gen 2. Accordingly Sirach goes on to speak of πᾶσα σὰρξ—cf in contrast to σάρκα μία in the Genesis account. Sirach also deviates from LXX in other respects. Ἀνθρώπος is changed to ἀνὴρ—a correction

Marriage and Divorce in the Qumran Writings

According to Pliny,¹⁴ the Essenes strongly favoured celibacy. Josephus adds that they disdained marriage although wedlock was not condemned altogether.¹⁵ At the same time we note that CD 16.3f refers to the Book of Jubilees as authoritative, a book which repeatedly discusses matters of intermarriage.¹⁶ Possibly there were different orders with different practices within the Essene movement. It is also possible that separate provisions—that is other than marriage—were made for procreation.¹⁷ What is clear is that marriage was not one of the major issues of life in the Essene movement.¹⁸ Yet we can infer from the Temple Scroll and the Damascus document that both divorce and polygamy seemed out of the question.¹⁹ Vawter questions whether these texts can be used to shed light on the attitude towards divorce adopted in the Qumran community as both texts refer to the king.²⁰ However, CD 4.20 - 5.1 suggests that the problem of polygamy was projected onto Israel's history as a whole. Furthermore, it can be assumed that Gen 1.27 (cf CD 4.21) implied for the writer not only the exclusion of polygamy but also of divorce. Possibly this is not spelt out explicitly because of the lack of prominence of marriage and divorce as major topics in the life of the community.

What can be noted is that in the few texts addressing the topic of marriage, it is verses such as Gen 1.27 (cf CD 4.21) and Deut 17.17

in the light of the original Hebrew?—and τῆν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ is replaced by τῷ ὁμοίῳ αὐτοῦ. These differences are compounded by the fact that Sirach is at this point not interested in marriage at all. In short, if Sirach made use of Gen 2.24, the author must have altered the latter to such an extent that it became virtually unrecognisable. While there are other intertestamental texts which address the problem of Jewish-gentile marriages, Gen 2.24 does not play any role in this connection.

¹⁴ See McNamara, *Judaism*, 142.

¹⁵ Josephus, *War*, 2.8.2.121.

¹⁶ Jub 20.4; 22.20; 25.1; 27.10; 30.1-15.

¹⁷ Josephus, *War*, 2.8.13.160f.

¹⁸ There is evidence of papyrus scraps which have been dated palaeographically to the beginning of the Christian era, classified as 4Q502 (Baillet, "Debris", 353-71). Baillet assumed that references to a man and his wife in connection with the phrase "producing seed" could be interpreted as pointing to a marriage ceremony. But this has been questioned by Vermes as well as Baumgarten who points to references to old men and women which, in his view, discount Baillet's conjecture ("Ritual", 125-35).

¹⁹ For the Temple Scroll text (57.16-19) see Fitzmyer, "Divorce", 216. Cf also CD 4.20 - 5.2.

²⁰ Vawter, "Divorce", 155ff.

(cf CD 5.2) rather than Gen 2.24 which were used as proof texts. Secondly, we observe in CD 5.6ff (cf 4.13) that "they", Israel, are said to have constantly and in various ways transgressed Moses' laws on sexual purity and relationships to near kin (Lev 18).²¹ While this does not provide us with specific evidence,²² it does indicate a deep dissatisfaction on the part of Qumran community members with the state of affairs in Israel at large, at least as far as marriage and divorce are concerned.²³

Genesis 2.24 in Philo's Writings

The first extant allegorical interpretation of Gen 2.24 is found in Philo's writings. In *Leg Alleg* II, 49 'man' becomes 'mind', 'father' is taken to denote 'God', 'mother' becomes 'God's wisdom' and 'wife' is interpreted as 'sense-perception'.²⁴ The latter, though inferior, wins over the mind because the mind dissolves into the inferior order of the flesh.²⁵ Elsewhere Philo appears to understand Gen 2.24 as a means of emphasising the intensity of the love it takes for a husband to endure leaving his parents.²⁶ At this point Philo interprets the Biblical text as referring to human marriage. But on the whole he is more concerned with relating one flesh union to sense-perceptibility, thus preparing the way for allegorical interpretations of other texts. This procedure differs markedly from that found in the Qumran community. As we saw, the writers of Damasuc Document and the Temple Scroll were primarily interested in interpreting and applying Moses' laws literally.²⁷

It has been suggested that Philo provides early examples of what is called an androgynous interpretation of Gen 2.24,²⁸ that is the

²¹ Again it is possible, or even probable, that contemporary conditions in Israel have been projected onto Israel's history as a whole. For this compare for instance the "Ten Weeks Apocalypse" (1 En 93.9 - cf Charles, "Enoch", 231 and Hengel, *Judaism* II, 180).

²² Sectarian texts such as the Qumran literature attack by definition the mother religion and can therefore not be taken at face value.

²³ In view of the sectarian character of the Qumran community this evidence must be exaggerated. It will have to be seen whether it can be supported from other strands of evidence.

²⁴ For a discussion see Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 260 and Winter, "Fragments", 68.

²⁵ Cf Philo, *De Gig*, 65

²⁶ Philo, *Genesis* I, 29.

²⁷ This may account in part for their lack of interest in Gen 2.24 as this text stands in some tension with the covenanters' attitude towards marriage.

²⁸ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 383 points to *Leg Alleg* 2.13.19-50 and *Quis Her* 164.

assumption that Adam was created bi-sexually, before being divided and re-united through sexual union. This is true as far as it goes. However, as 'reunification', Philo hardly goes beyond the narrator's own assertions in Gen 2. Therefore Philo's interpretation should not at this point be seen as a peculiar precursor of later, typically gnostic, interpretations which would provide new insights about first century hellenistic Judaism. The significance of his treatment of Gen 2.24 for the study of Eph 5 must not be exaggerated. It is impossible to reconstruct from the sources available a gnostic precursor which might have exploited Gen 2.24 to support the notion of spiritual union between humans and the heavenly 'powers', although this possibility cannot be ruled out altogether.

The One Flesh Union in Gnostic Texts

Commentators have suggested that the marriage imagery of Ephesians was developed along the lines of what is called the *hieros gamos* concept found primarily in gnostic sources dating from the second, third and fourth centuries AD.²⁹ This question will be addressed in a separate sub-section.³⁰ Here I intend to focus on one aspect specifically, the so-called *mia sarx* concept which is also found in a variety of gnostic sources.

This concept entails the notion that man was first created as a bi-sexual being who was divided when woman was created from Adam's rib, a division which was said to have been overcome by way of sexual union. This notion can be found in particular in the Gospel of Thomas in the second half of the second century.³¹ Logion 22 has Jesus say that after having restored the androgynous unity the disciple will enter the kingdom.³² Jesus' mission is repeatedly characterised as aiming to bring about sexual reunification. It is at this point that Schnackenburg rightly detects the main weakness of associating Eph 5 with the gnostic *mia sarx* concept. Ephesians in no way envisages a reunification.³³ A further point of difference is the insistence of the Gospel of Philip that marriage is a "pure and

²⁹ See primarily Gnlika's excursus in *Epheser*, 290-4. Also Pokorny, "Epheserbief", 190 and Batey, "Mia Sarx", 276.

³⁰ See pp150ff.

³¹ Lincoln, "Use", 62.

³² For similar statements to the same effect see the Gospel of Philip 64, 68 and 70. Fischer, *Tendenz*, 193 also points to ch 79 where the focus is specifically on the bridal chamber. This follows on the heels of ch 78 which claims that Christ came to restore the separation of the sexes.

³³ Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 260.

spiritual" concept, not a "fleshly" one.³⁴ This contrasts with the Ephesian household code which concludes with a clear indication that the writer relates the one flesh union to human marriage rather than to the spiritual dimension of the Christ-church relationship.

These difficulties are compounded by the problem of dating gnostic traditions. As is well known, the research undertaken primarily by Colpe and Schenke makes it highly doubtful whether any sophisticated 'system' of gnosticism can be presupposed for the first century AD.³⁵ There is certainly no clear evidence of gnosticism in first century Western Asia Minor. This is of course not to deny that the beginnings of gnosticism should probably be assumed to go back to the first century. The fairly widespread occurrence of gnostic concepts in the second century makes this assumption necessary. However, as Arnold points out, the syncretistic nature of second century gnosticism is more likely to have appropriated ideas from Ephesians rather than vice versa.³⁶ Pokorny's suggestion that Ephesians shows traces of confrontation with gnosticism³⁷ is essentially circular—it presupposes Ephesians as a source which proves the existence of gnosticism at the time of its writing. Pokorny's optimism is therefore misplaced. The preferable alternative is to interpret elements of controversy in Ephesians as a reaction against the contemporary beliefs and practices of magic and mystery religions.³⁸

³⁴ Gospel of Philip 122.

³⁵ As Yamauchi, "Gnosticism", 129-41 demonstrates, this has not been altered by the Nag Hammadi findings.

³⁶ Arnold, *Powers*, 26. See specifically Wild's discussion of the use of Eph 6.10-20 by later gnostic sources ("Warrior", 284ff). An example more pertinent to the present chapter is the Apocryphon of John II, 23.4-11 which "refers Gen 2.24f. to spiritual, primordial union. Here Adam recognises in Eve, his spiritual partner, 'the numinous epinoia'... Joining with her,... he receives the power of wisdom" (Apocryphon of John II, 20.18f; cf also numerous Nag Hammadi texts, see Pagels, "Adam", 158f). This reading may well have been influenced by Eph 5, but should not be taken as evidence that Eph 5.31f itself envisaged a direct applicability of Gen 2.24 to the spiritual union between Christ and the church. In any case, later gnostic applications of Biblical passages must not be generalised as the example of interpretation of the Christ-church relationship in Valentinian gnosticism shows (cf C. Barth, *Interpretation*, 98).

³⁷ Pokorny, "Epheserbrief", 190.

³⁸ See Arnold, *Powers*, 28-30. It is of course true that gnosticism is at times hard to separate from gnostic elements in the mystery religions. Nevertheless Colpe and Schenke concluded that gnosticism as a systematic phenomenon is clearly a later development.

The gnostic *mia sarx* concept does little to enrich our understanding of the one flesh union in general and the quotation from Gen 2 in Eph 5 in particular. The main reasons include major inherent differences between the thrust of Eph 5 and the extant gnostic sources. These difficulties are multiplied by the lack of precise dating methods for gnostic traditions. The likelihood is in any case that gnostic thought exploited Ephesians rather than the latter being influenced by the former.

Rabbinic Texts on Marriage and Divorce

It has occasionally been claimed that Gen 2.24 featured prominently in the Mishnah and the Talmud.³⁹ On closer inspection this assumption is proven wrong. The only clear examples we can draw upon are San 58 and MRGen 18.5. Other than these there are only various texts that deal with marriage in general. We shall discuss briefly both clear references to Gen 2.24 and general discussions about marriage and divorce.

In contrast to Philo, there are no extant allegorical interpretations of Gen 2.24 in the rabbinic writings. Yet the rabbis held, in common with Philo and various gnostic sources, the view that man had been created as a bi-sexual being who after the separation caused by the creation of woman had to be reunited with 'his other half'.⁴⁰ This general analysis can be supplemented with the observation that the extant rabbinic material appears to be much more concerned with legal matrimonial matters⁴¹ than with expounding the love bond described in Gen 2.24.⁴² This emphasis was accompanied by a gradual institutionalisation of marriage to an extent not envisaged in the Pentateuch. Marriage was clearly considered to be a divine ordinance. Occasionally it was seen to be better to be married unhappily than not to be married at all.⁴³ Provision was made for punishing an adulterous wife; the possibility of an adulterous

³⁹ Sampley, *Flesh*, 56 and Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 260. Neither writer provides specific references.

⁴⁰ Barth, *Ephesians*, 725 n446 gives references. One might add MRGen 8.9 and 22.2. See further Batey, "Mia Sarx", 272. For perhaps the earliest evidence of this view see Plato, *Symposium*, 189-93.

⁴¹ Moore, *Judaism II*, 119.

⁴² The only texts clearly concerned with this aspect are Yeb 62a and San 76b. Partly this can be explained on account of the very nature of halakhic traditions. Nevertheless it is astonishing that hardly any reference is made to the binding character of the one flesh union.

⁴³ Kid 41a.

husband, on the other hand, was not contemplated in rabbinic law.⁴⁴ While caution has to be exercised in the use of these sources which date from the third century onwards, a good case can be made, according to Neusner, for regarding the marriage laws contained in Yebamoth as reflecting views held in the middle of the first century if not earlier.⁴⁵

A major issue not only in the debate between Hillel and Shammai about marriage-related matters, but also in later generations, revolved around the grounds and procedures for divorce.⁴⁶ Given the halakhic nature of much of the relevant source texts (especially Kiddushin, Ketubot, Nedarim, Yebamot and Gittin) this is not surprising. What is surprising is the lack of recourse to Gen 2.24 in these debates, especially in view of the rabbinic tendency to relate earthly marriage to divine and heavenly realities. One reason for this focus on legal writs of divorce, parameters for re-marriage, inner-matrimonial duties and social restrictions imposed on candidates for marriage may be the situational character of these tracts. Their tendency was to move from a given problem to Scripture, not the other way around.⁴⁷ On numerous occasions this resulted in laying down rules and procedures for dissolving marriages. To be sure, Yeb 37b warns clearly against marrying a woman with the intention to divorce her later. Yet, apart from such warnings there seems little to discourage husbands from divorcing their wives. The whole of the tract Gittin makes simple provision for a man wishing to divorce his wife or indeed who wishes to retract his earlier writ of divorce. In fact, as Git 2.5 expressly states, just as the deaf-mute, the imbecile and the minor ones are qualified to write their own divorce bill, so are women.

This brings us to the two texts which interpret Gen 2.24 explicitly. GenR 18.5 interprets *father* and *mother* as meaning the *relatives of the father* and the *relatives of the mother*, thus prohibiting proselytes from being married to their paternal or maternal sister. While not all rabbis are said to agree with this view, the text leaves no doubt that Gen 2.24 can and should be applied both to safeguarding legitimate offspring within marriage and to legal questions relating to divorce. It is noteworthy that the allusion to the one flesh union—"...shall cleave to his wife"—was not applied to marriage at all. Instead it is

⁴⁴ This view was challenged by Jesus according to Mark 10.11 (cf Manson, *Sayings*, 136).

⁴⁵ Neusner, *Mishnah*, 42-5.

⁴⁶ Bowker, *Jesus*, 38.

⁴⁷ Neusner, *Mishnah*, 203.

applied to the case of two men who slept with the same harlot. Rabbi Jonah suggests that on the basis of Gen 2.24b the first man is not culpable; the second man, however, is guilty. Gen 2.24 was primarily brought to bear on the question of the legitimacy of procreation and offspring.

San 58a, which is the second text to interact with Gen 2.24, takes this discussion further. Rabbi Akiba and Rabbi Eliezer are portrayed as discussing whether, on the grounds of Gen 2.24, a proselyte should divorce his wife after conversion to Judaism.⁴⁸ The noteworthy aspect of this discussion is that Gen 2.24 is consulted in order to resolve matters of divorce. Gen 2.24 is even regarded as a text which calls for divorce in certain circumstances!

It must be concluded that Gen 2.24 was subordinated to such concerns as the grounds and procedures of divorce. This coheres with the statistical observation that the so-called divorce bill in Deut 24.1 features approximately ten times as prominently in the Mishnah and the Talmud as the 'marriage text' Gen 2.24.⁴⁹ Given Neusner's observation that the Mishnah tracts to do with marriage and divorce, particularly Yebamot, are likely to reflect mid-first century Judaism one cannot escape the likelihood that divorce was an issue of the utmost concern then as it is in today's Western world. This is corroborated by the evidence of the Qumran texts discussed above, which are highly critical of what was perceived to be Israel's mismanagement of matters of marriage, divorce and re-marriage.

The basic readiness of the tannaitic teachers of the Law to grant divorce and re-marriage surprises especially in view of the fact that marriage is seen in the Mishnah as a divine institution which reflects heavenly realities. Moreover, one flesh union is regarded in the Mishnah as amounting to the reunification of the originally bi-sexual and androgynous man. One might have expected the rabbis to exploit Gen 2.24 for the purpose of undergirding both these points.⁵⁰ Instead one finds that Gen 2.24 played only a minor role in the Mishnah and Talmud and that these two points just listed did not prevent the religious teachers from making ample provision for divorce. The implication of Gen 2.24 that marriage should be indissoluble⁵¹ by

⁴⁸ Rabbi Akiba here understands both mother and father as meaning mother; Eliezer understood mother to mean sister of the mother while father is understood to refer to the sister of the father.

⁴⁹ This observation is based on the index of Epstein, *Talmud*.

⁵⁰ A later text which clearly defends Gen 2.24 as safeguarding marital fidelity is found in the Acts Xanth, (cf Pagels, "Adam", 158).

⁵¹ For further discussion of this point see Lehmann, "Gen 2", 264-7.

virtue of being grounded in God's creation order appears to have made little if any impact on rabbinic literature. Instead Gen 1.28, the command to "be fruitful and increase in number", took precedence as the first divine command in Scripture.⁵² In the opinion of some rabbis, fulfilling it at times may legitimately involve divorce and the marriage with another woman (San 58a), or in special cases, such as infertility of the wife, even polygamy.⁵³

Genesis 2.24 and the New Testament

On the whole what has emerged so far coheres with the NT portrayal of Jesus' disputes with the Pharisees over marriage, divorce and re-marriage. The main text is Mark 10.1-12 (par Matt 19.1-9).⁵⁴ Jesus is reported to have been confronted by the Pharisees who question him about the legitimacy of divorce. The Pharisees' question was fashioned in line with the wording of Deut 24.1-3 (ἀπολῦσαι), thus indicating their desire to question Jesus about the divorce bill. This emphasis by the narrator coheres with Jesus' prompt reply "what has Moses told you?" which enables the Pharisees to refer to the divorce bill directly. This is then countered by Jesus' use of Gen 1.27 and 2.24. There is little doubt that this device of setting two Pentateuchal references over and against what is portrayed as the Pharisaic exploitation of the divorce bill is deliberate. The evangelists may have been aware that Gen 2.24 was more often associated with divorce than with marriage. If this assumption is right, Mark 10.8f provides a clear example of re-claiming a Biblical text from those teachers who primarily used it for undergirding their case for divorce. Unfortunately we cannot go so far as to deduce from this text that Gen 2.24 was interpreted radically differently by Jesus' Jewish contemporaries. While this may well have been the case, neither Mark 10 nor Matt 19 suggest that the Pharisees wished to use Gen 2.24 in their argument with Jesus. Rather, they are portrayed as tempting Jesus to face up to the Mosaic divorce bill. It is Jesus who is reported to have introduced Gen 2.24 into the debate.

According to Mark 10.9 Jesus interpreted Gen 2.24 as a reference to the divinely sanctioned one flesh union between husband and wife.

⁵² Pagels, "Adam", 147f. Cf also the probably rather late non-rabbinic text Acts of Thomas 88-98 (Cf Hennecke, *Apocrypha* II, 425ff) which has Mygdonia leave her husband on the grounds that she is now married to Christ.

⁵³ Ibid, 148.

⁵⁴ For the literary relationship between the two texts cf Hoffmann, "Sayings", 51-66 and Mahoney, "Clauses", 29-38 - it does not affect the present discussion.

Paul claims in 1 Cor 7.10 that his teaching on marriage and divorce "comes from the Lord". It therefore comes as no surprise that he makes use of Gen 2.24 when referring to one flesh union, albeit with a prostitute (1 Cor 6.16). This text also focuses on the latter part of Gen 2.24. The quotation flows from the observation that believers' bodies "are members of Christ" (v15) and goes on to contrast one flesh union with a prostitute (v16) with spiritual union with the Lord (v17). Clearly Paul's discussion was prompted by the need to deal with the problem of prostitution and is to that extent quite different from Eph 5. Nevertheless both texts utilise Gen 2.24 in connection with one flesh union, but does Ephesians go beyond Paul in using this motif and text in connection with the spiritual Christ-church relationship?

For the moment it suffices to note that the picture painted by the gospels coheres in principle with the significance of Gen 2.24 in rabbinic literature, and that 1 Corinthians too co-locates a quotation from Gen 2.24 with the *body of Christ* metaphor as an expression of spiritual unity.

Conclusion

From an examination of the Qumran polemic against marital practices in Israel and the NT polemic against the leaders' handling of marital issues, it has emerged that around the turn of the centuries there may well have been a greater emphasis by Israel's religious authorities on the legal aspects of divorce rather than on the pastoral implications of the marriage text in Gen 2.24. This can cautiously be confirmed from later rabbinic literature on marital matters, which is likely to reflect first century rabbinic teaching. This conclusion cannot be avoided even if the polemical nature of both the Damascus document and the gospels, as well as the halakhic character of the Mishnah and the Talmud, are taken into account. The picture painted by the Qumran writings, the gospels and the rabbinic literature agrees to such an extent that uncertainties regarding the dating of individual writings, especially the rabbinic literature, recede into the background.

Owing to a paucity of reliable sources we cannot determine to what extent these conclusions can be presupposed for diaspora Judaism, notably in Western Asia Minor. They would, nevertheless, seem to form a plausible working hypothesis for the interpretation of Eph 5.21-33 which appears to react to a competing understanding of

the text quoted.⁵⁵ In short, it is more than possible that the author of Ephesians used the household code in reaction to what he perceived to be a grave misuse of the concept of marriage. He did so by supplementing the Colossian household code with quotations from the Pentateuch, presumably to add further authority to his argument in view of his different audience. Having attempted a reconstruction of a possible background for Eph 5.21-33, we must examine the development of thought within this section of the letter..

THE "TRAIN OF THOUGHT" OF EPH 5.21-33

The major interpretative issue of this first part of the Ephesian household code is whether the author's intention was to illustrate the Christ-church relationship with the help of human marriage imagery, or to use the Christ-church relationship to illustrate human marriage. This matter which is crucial for the interpretation of v31, has to be decided primarily on the basis of the syntactical and topical coherence of the section. It is not certain whether the author's use of the quotation from Genesis was deliberate, in order to close the section, or merely incidental. For the sake of convenience I have set out the syntactical pattern of the text of Eph 5.21-33 as follows:⁵⁶

21 Ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ

22 γυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις...

23 ὅτι ἄνθρωπος ἐστίν...
ὡς καὶ ὁ Χριστός...

24 αὐτὸς σώτηρ...
ἀλλὰ ὡς ἡ ἐκκλησία...
οὕτως καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες...

25 Οἱ ἄνδρες ἀγαπᾶτε...
καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστός...
καὶ ἑαυτὸν παρέδωκεν...

26 ἵνα αὐτὴν ἁγιάσῃ...

27 ἵνα παραστήσῃ...
μὴ ἔχουσιν...
ἀλλ' ἵνα ἡ ἁγία...

28 οὕτως ὀφείλουσιν καὶ οἱ ἄνδρες...

⁵⁵ Hence the emphatic ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω in v32.

⁵⁶ The syntactical hierarchy of the text is reflected in the position of each line: the further a line starts to right the more subordinate its syntactical position.

- 29 ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα...
 οὐδεὶς γὰρ ποτε...
 ἀλλὰ ἐκτρέφει καὶ θάλπει...
 καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς...
 30 ὅτι μέλη ἐσμέν...

 31 ??? GENESIS QUOTATION ???
 32 ??? INTERPRETATION ???

 33 πλὴν καὶ ὑμεῖς οἱ καθ' ἓνα ἕκαστος τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα...
 ἢ δὲ γυνὴ ἵνα φοβῇται τὸν ἄνδρα

Two pressing issues for the present purpose are whether ἀντὶ τούτου, which introduces the quotation, is preceded by a specific referent, and secondly, how vv31f fit syntactically into their co-text. Before addressing these matters we must turn to the overall flow of thought in this passage. Sampley proposes to divide the passage according to subject matter.⁵⁷ He suggests the two groups:

- husband-wife relationship (22,23a,24b,25a,28,29b,31,32a,33)
- Christ-church relationship (23b,24a,25b,26,27,29c,30,32b)

The alternating movement between these two groups can partly be supported by the distribution of comparative particles (ὥς, οὕτως, καθὼς - 23b,24b,25b,28a,29c). However, given that such particles occur no less than ten times within eleven verses, virtually any structure could be supported to some extent by pointing to these. In any case, fifty percent of these particles do not support Sampley's division (22b,24a,28a,33a[2x]). Batey proposes a different division of this text:⁵⁸

- Christ's sovereignty over the church (vv21-24)
- Christ's love for the church (vv25-27)
- The unity of Christ and the church (vv28-33)

Surprisingly Batey makes no mention here of human marriage at all. He appears to reverse the syntactical relationship of the major propositions of the passage. Every single mention of the Christ-church relationship occurs in subordinate clauses (23b,24a,25b,27a, 29c). The only possible exception is v32 to which we shall return

⁵⁷ Sampley, *Flesh*, 104.

⁵⁸ Batey, "Mia Sarx", 270.

later. While this may not be decisive, it certainly cautions us against automatically assuming that the Christ-church relationship lies at the heart of the author's intention here.

Why then did the author introduce the Christ-church relationship at all? If the Colossian *Haustafel* (Col 3.18 - 4.1) and the second and third part of the Ephesian *Haustafel* (6.1-4 and vv5-9) are the norm, one cannot escape the observation that Eph 5.28b-33 appears redundant at least as regards form. Whereas vv22 and 24 form the first bracket (wives) and vv25 and 28a the second (husbands), vv28bff have to be seen as an addition to the ordinary pattern of *subordinate person* followed by *master figure*). But this is not the only peculiarity of this part of the household code. The very fact that the admonitions to both wives (v22) and husbands (v25) are reiterated (vv24b,28a) suggests that the author's *Leitmotif* was human marriage. Within these brackets the *Leitmotif* is supported with the help of the Christ-church relationship (vv23,24a). This pattern of the secondary motif being bracketed by the *Leitmotif* is inverted in the 'appendix' (vv28b-33). Here the *Leitmotif* forms the core around which the secondary motif forms a bracket (vv29b,32).⁵⁹ Regardless of this inversion the focus remains the same: human marriage. The conclusion to the paragraph (v33) does not even mention the Christ-church relationship. These observations have been ignored by various commentators.⁶⁰ The question remains: what caused the writer to digress from the simple pattern *subordinate figure - superior figure* which dominates the rest of the *Haustafel* and the Colossian parallel? Following on from this, what is the referent of ἀντὶ τοῦτου which introduces the quotation from Genesis?

Lincoln proposes plausibly that the text to be quoted occupied the writer's mind as early as in v28.⁶¹ This might suggest that the purpose of vv28b-30 was to prepare the way for the quotation. Moreover, v28b seems slightly out of place. V28a would have provided a perfect ending for this section of the household code. Possibly the author attempted in v28b to extend the argument in order to set the stage for Gen 2.24. Support for this comes from the observation that

⁵⁹ Compare my examination of ch 1.15-23 (in chapter two) where a discussion of the Christ-church relationship is developed in the context of God's supremacy.

⁶⁰ Apart from Batey cf for a recent example MacDonald, *Churches*, 118. Better Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 352.

⁶¹ Lincoln, "Use", 31. Cf the shift from σῶμα (v28) to σὰρξ (v29) which prepares the way for Gen 2.24; similarly Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 285; Conzelmann, *Epheser*, 120; pace Steinmetz, *Heilszuversicht*, 92f who argues that v30 motivated the quotation.

the inherent logic of v28b presupposes the one flesh union mentioned in the quotation. The suspicion that the author already anticipates the quotation grows when it is seen that v30, which immediately precedes the quotation, is equally awkward in context. Gnailka notes trivially that the verse gives the reason,⁶² but leaves the reader guessing as to what precisely the reason refers to. How can the fact that μέλη ἐσμὲν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ (v30) substantiate the claim that Χριστὸς ἐκτρέφει καὶ θάλπει τὴν ἐκκλησίαν (v29)? One might hope to gain some clarification from a comparison with the similar phrase ἐσμὲν ἀλλήλων μέλη in ch 4.25. It emerges that ch 5.30 goes beyond ch 4 in its application of the body of Christ imagery, thus strengthening the formal link (ὅτι) with the preceding verse. However, this still does not clarify the logic of vv29f. While the link with v29 is beyond dispute, it is nonetheless purely formal. Perhaps the causal force of ὅτι perhaps not be pressed.

Strangely commentators by and large fail to face up to this problem.⁶³ A solution might be sought by recognising a similar tension in the writer's argument just prior to the quotation of ch 5.14b. There we saw that the awkward v14a provides a vital hint for the interpretation of his use of the material quoted and thus had to be included even if it created some discursive tension. The same may well apply here. In other words, while v30 formally refers back to v29, it also points forward and anticipates the causal introduction of the quotation itself (ἀντὶ τούτου). If so, we could ignore the introductory phrase of the quotation and paraphrase as follows "...because we are members of his body a man shall leave..."

Admittedly this does not completely clarify the force of ὅτι in relation to v29. Perhaps it is best to acknowledge the causal thrust of the preposition, but translate it "after all...", rather than "because". Vv30-32 may well form a digression which elaborates on v29c: καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. This would certainly be in keeping with the resumptive force of πλὴν (v33), but also with the fact that v32 specifically reiterates the Christ-ecclesia phraseology of v29, thus returning the reader to where v29 left off. Perhaps, as we traditionally think of v32 as an explanation of v31, we should extend our scope and regard the whole of vv30-32 as the author's

⁶² Gnailka, *Epheser*, 285.

⁶³ Nida, *Handbook*, 145 paraphrases "We know this to be the case because we are members of his body." This would be attractive, but it is unclear whether this can be supported from the use of ὅτι elsewhere in the epistle (2.11,12,18; 3.3; 4.9,25; 5.5,16,23,30; 6.8,9,12).

justification for utilising the Christ-church relationship to shed light on human marriage.

How does this relate to the earlier observation that the quotation substituted ἀντὶ τούτου for ἕνεκεν τούτου (LXX; Mark 10.7; Matt 19.5)? Whereas Barth, on the grounds of the parallel in Mark 10.7, affirms that the two expressions are synonymous,⁶⁴ a survey of constructions involving ἕνεκεν in the NT suggests otherwise. Mostly such expressions should be translated "for the sake of".⁶⁵ However, this would not really be suitable for the present quotation. Hence the author replaced ἀντὶ τούτου (because of this...) for ἕνεκεν τούτου (LXX), created a smoother transition between vv30 and 31. This suggestion must now be tested against the use of ἀντί elsewhere in the NT.

Robinson observed that the use of ἀντί by Paul "does not suggest opposition, but correspondence".⁶⁶ He does not go on to offer a paraphrase. In fact, to do so would be difficult if ἀντί is taken purely to denote correspondence. A more promising route is Abbott's suggestion⁶⁷ that the use of ἀντί should be compared to that of the phrase ἀνθ' ὧν. It emerges that the term has to be translated consequentially ("as a result") or causally ("therefore").⁶⁸ We have here a term much closer in meaning to διὸ λέγει (cf 4.8; 5.14) and כִּי (Gen 2.24)⁶⁹ than to ἕνεκεν τούτου ("for the sake of"). A comparison with Lk 12.3 also shows that ἀντί can be used to indicate an important aside before the resumption of the main line of thought.⁷⁰ This coheres with the observation made above that vv30-32 are likely to function as an explanatory digression, not as the

⁶⁴ Barth, *Ephesians*, 721. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 380 notes the change in wording between Ephesians and LXX, but does not pursue the matter further.

⁶⁵ Cf Matt 5.10,11; 10.18,39; 16.25; 19.29; Mark 8.35; 13.9; Luke 6.22; 9.24; 18.29; 21.12; Acts 19.32; 28.20; Rom 8.36; 14.20. The only exceptions are Matt 12.5; Mark 10.7; Luke 4.18—all OT quotations!—and Acts 26.21 (here the term is best translated as "instead...").

⁶⁶ Robinson, *Ephesians*, 208. V. Soden translates "instead of this" (in Abbott, *Ephesians*, 173), but this neglects the weight of vv29b.30.

⁶⁷ See also Hoffmann and von Siebenthal, *Grammatik*, 540.

⁶⁸ The expression occurs in Luke 1.20; 12.3; 19.44; Acts 12.23 and 2 Thes 2.10. In four of these cases the phrase is followed by a negation and should be translated causally. In Lk 12.3, however, there is no negation and the phrase is best translated as expressing a consequence.

⁶⁹ Compare my discussion of Gen 2.24 as an aside above.

⁷⁰ In Lk 12.3 Jesus briefly digresses before returning to the main argument (v4 - λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν...).

syntactical climax of vv21-33.⁷¹ The focal point of the author's paragraph on marriage consists in the admonition to wives to submit to their husbands (vv22,24) and to husbands to love their wives (vv25,28). This is quite clear from the resumptive chapter summary in v33. Given the structure of vv21-33, the force of v33 and the role of vv30-32, one can surmise also that vv30-32 relate directly to the admonition to men (vv25-29), and not to the whole of vv21ff. The point can now be illustrated as follows:

21	Ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ	<i>basic moral paradigm</i>
22	γυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις...	<i>1. admonition to wives</i>
23	ὅτι ἄνὴρ ἐστίν...	:
	ὥς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς...	:
	αὐτὸς σώτηρ...	:
24	ἀλλὰ ὥς ἡ ἐκκλησία...	:
	οὕτως καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες...	<i>1. admonition repeated</i>
25	Οἱ ἄνδρες ἀγαπᾶτε...	<i>2. admonition to husbands</i>
	καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς...	:
	καὶ ἑαυτὸν παρέδωκεν...	:
26	ἵνα αὐτὴν ἀγιάσῃ...	:
27	ἵνα παραστήσῃ...	:
	μὴ ἔχουσιν...	:
	ἀλλ' ἵνα ἡ ἀγία...	:
28	οὕτως ὀφείλουσιν καὶ οἱ ἄνδρες...	<i>2. admonition repeated</i>
	ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα...	:
29	οὐδεὶς γὰρ ποτε...	:
	ἀλλὰ ἐκτρέφει καὶ θάλπει...	:
	καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς...	<i>and elaborated</i>
30	ὅτι μέλη ἐσμέν...	<i>digression</i>
31	??? GENESIS QUOTATION ???	:
32	??? INTERPRETATION ???	<i>digression</i>
33	πλὴν καὶ ὑμεῖς οἱ καθ' ἓνα ἕκαστος	<i>admonitions</i>
	τὴν ἑαυτοῦ... ἡ δὲ γυνὴ ἵνα φοβῇται τὸν ἄνδρα	<i>repeated</i>

⁷¹ Such asides serve the purpose of emphasis rather than introducing a minor point. As we saw, Gen 2.24 itself is an illustration of this point. The fact that the NT author here takes up a summary aside from the OT text may just indicate his deep roots in the text of Israel's Scriptures. In any case, he is likely to have appreciated the narrator's comment in Gen 2 as a valid theological claim: the basis of human marriage has always been the order of God's creation; its expression in the one flesh union is thus in accordance with God's creational intention.

This reveals the basic but important insight that the quoted text with comment, above all, refers for the writer to the husband's responsibility to love his wife (second admonition). At the same time the digression, together with vv28b and 29, shows the writer's perceived need to dwell much longer on the husband's responsibility than on the admonition to wives to submit to their husbands. This is not at the expense of the latter, but may be an indication either that our author was breaking new ground here, or alternatively that he was attempting to reclaim the spirit of Gen 2.24 for his intended Christian community. These alternatives will have to be explored further.

Having examined the train of thought in Eph 5.21-33 we can finally move on to hermeneutical and theological considerations. We recall that the options proposed by scholars range from typology,⁷² prophecy and fulfilment⁷³ to 'prooftexting'.⁷⁴ Fischer asks whether the author may have allegorised Gen 2.24.⁷⁵ According to Eadie the quotation was primarily included to show the source of the author's imagery.⁷⁶ Bruce claims an instance of *midrash pesher* exegesis of the kind found in the Qumran literature,⁷⁷ while Mussner is content to speak of a simple "analogy".⁷⁸ Should any of these proposals be endorsed?

HERMENEUTICS AND THEOLOGY IN EPH 5.31 - A FRESH LOOK

It has been noted by the majority of commentators that the precise nature of the use of Gen 2.24 in Eph 5 is tied up closely with the use of *μυστήριον* in v32. However, there is as little agreement on the interpretation of this term as there is on the question of the author's underlying hermeneutics. Does *μυστήριον* denote a 'hidden meaning', possibly along the lines of the Qumran mysteries?⁷⁹ The prime text to consider is 1QpHab 7.5-7 which is clearly thinking of a

⁷² Lincoln, "Use", 31 and 33.

⁷³ Barth, *Ephesians*, 639 and 732. Elsewhere he also speaks of "allegory" (643), the "deepest meaning" of Genesis (648) and a "secret meaning" (738).

⁷⁴ Conzelmann, *Epheser*, 120.

⁷⁵ Fischer, *Tendenz*, 194.

⁷⁶ Eadie, *Ephesians*, 428f.

⁷⁷ Bruce, *Ephesians*, 394.

⁷⁸ Mussner, *Christus*, 158

⁷⁹ Coppens, "Mysteries", 134-46. Cf Conzelmann, *Epheser*, 120.

Scriptural mystery.⁸⁰ The main objection to a similar interpretation of Eph 5.31f is that τοῦτο (v32) qualifies μυστήριον rather than the quotation. Also, as Caragounis showed, the term should not be taken to refer to the quotation.⁸¹ Others hold that μυστήριον refers to marriage as a higher love bond. Again others suggest that the term qualifies the Christ-church union.⁸² However, the overall thrust of the passage has primarily to do with human marriage. The term μυστήριον alone has not proved decisive clue for understanding the author's hermeneutical presuppositions. Further pointers are needed.

The Grammatical Antecedent and the Rationale of vv30-32

Almost thirty years ago Coppens made the suggestion⁸³ that vv29b,30 should be regarded as the antecedent of ἀντὶ τούτου. Unfortunately his proposal has largely been ignored.⁸⁴ It is well worth re-considering, particularly as it is consistent with the findings so far of this chapter. The following is an attempt to translate these findings so far into a paraphrase of vv29-32:

No-one ever hated his own flesh; instead one nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church. After all, we are members of his body and it is because of what Christ the head has illustrated through his relationship with the church that a man leaves his parents...

It might be countered that this reads rather too much into the phrase ἀντὶ τούτου. However, the church has already provided the model on which wives should base their submission to husbands (vv23f). In that connection husbands were paralleled to Christ's position as the head of the church. It is therefore easy to see how Christ's function in relation to the church should govern the husband's relationship with their wives. It is precisely the provision of the christological parallel

⁸⁰ פול הוי רבני עברין הנקבאים

⁸¹ Caragounis, *Mysterion*, 26-34.

⁸² Hodge, *Ephesians*, 258 and Lincoln, "Use", 32f. Similarly Stoeckhardt, *Ephesians*, 247 who interprets the term as referring to the fact that human marriage pictures the Christ-church relationship.

⁸³ Coppens, "Mystery", 132-65.

⁸⁴ A somewhat similar proposal is by Abbott, *Ephesians*, 173 who links the quotation with v29b. He paraphrases as follows: "because a man is to love his wife as Christ the Church". The difficulty with this is that v29 does not actually mention the husband's duty to love his wife. This concept would have to be supplied from v28 which is surely too distant to be the main referent of the quotation. Strangely Coppens has not been consulted on this matter by commentators. Bruce, *Ephesians*, 395 and Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 381 mention Coppens but do not interact with his interpretation.

to the role of the husband which is being undergirded by the explanatory digression.

Coppens was correct when he noted that essentially "the author is still speaking of marriage".⁸⁵ The Christ-church analogy is introduced to supply the hermeneutical parameters for understanding the husband's responsibility towards his wife, as expressed in v31. This is supported by the bracket (Χριστός + ἐκκλησίαν) which surrounds the quotation (vv29,32). The husband's role in one flesh union is now related to the example of Christ vis-a-vis his church. This new interpretative framework clearly enhances the impact of the quoted text. In Gen 2.24 the narrator commented that the one flesh union is wholly rooted in God's creation order. To use Coppens' words, the author engages in "daring and original exegesis... From now on, it is by reason of this union, [of Christ and his church] ἀντὶ τούτου, that the law of marriage is verified, and it is perhaps this new reason which led St Paul to move away from the Septuagint reading ἐνεκεν τούτου."⁸⁶ The pattern of ethical directive followed by a reference to Christ's model behaviour is familiar from ch 5.1f.⁸⁷ Christ's relationship to his church is a model for all believers (v1f), but particularly for husbands (vv25-32).

For those who are ἐν Χριστῷ, marriage is no longer merely a function of God's creation order, its basis is vastly extended and now includes Christ's loving care for his body, the church (5.29). It is in this sense that one can agree with Barth's statement that the Christ-church relationship is the "basis upon which all statements on marriage are founded."⁸⁸ However, this does not cancel out the narrator's view in Gen 2 that one flesh union is literally natural, ie based on God's will as revealed in the creation of Adam and from his side Eve. It is not a matter of substituting one framework for the other, but of extending the framework presupposed in the Pentateuch so as to include the new dimension of the Christ event and the ongoing love and care offered by Christ for his church. This opens up an entirely new dimension for marriage, that is marriage ἐν Χριστῷ. The marital love bond no longer depends for its basis on natural

⁸⁵ Coppens, "Mystery", 147 n36.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 147. Whether it is wise to speak of *exegesis* in this connection remains to be seen.

⁸⁷ γίνεσθε οὖν μιμηταὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ... καὶ περιπατεῖτε ἐν ἀγάπῃ καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ἡγάπησεν ἡμᾶς. Notice the presence of the same phrase καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς as in v29. Both at the beginning and near the end of ch 5 Christ's behaviour furnishes the model on which Christians should base their own existence.

⁸⁸ Barth, *Ephesians*, 737.

attraction alone (as in Gen 2.23f) - its enhanced foundation now includes Christ's love for the church. Its purpose is to reiterate Christ's love within human marriage. The question now has to be, what is the hermeneutical rationale underlying this extension of the basis of marriage? At this point it is necessary to interact with a recent study of Eph 5.21ff by Miletic.

Jewish and Pauline Adam Speculation?

Miletic's contention is that Eph 5.22-4—an expansion of the Colossian parallel—is rooted in Pauline and Jewish Adam speculation. The author is said to have wanted to "link Christian marriage to the New Adam and Eve relationship expressed at Eph 5.31-32."⁸⁹ Traces of such speculation are detected by Miletic in such terms as *subordination*, *saviour* and *head/body*.⁹⁰ He goes on to trace overtones of Gen 1 and 2 in Eph 2.14-8⁹¹ and to draw out similarities between chs 2.15ff and 5.23c.⁹² Consequently, he suggests, the whole of Eph 5.22-33 is heavily influenced by the quoted text Gen 2.24.⁹³ This point had previously been made by Sampley who had argued that the pattern ὑποτάσσω + Torah text recurs repeatedly in Pauline literature. He went on to discover a similar pattern in Eph 5.22-33 and to conclude that Gen 2.24 played a formative part for the whole of vv22-33.⁹⁴ This is rightly disputed by Lincoln who restricts the formative significance of the quotation to vv28-33.⁹⁵ Miletic in turn argued for taking the Adam speculation behind these verses into account. He concludes that Sampley's position is vindicated after all⁹⁶ and builds on this premise by noting the σῶμα link between chs 2.16; 5.23c and 5.31.⁹⁷ If, Miletic continues, v23c is based on Adam speculation and if it anticipates the quotation, it follows that the thrust of this quotation is that "reference is now made to both Adam and Eve."⁹⁸ The quotation brings the Jewish *Urzeit/Endzeit* scheme

⁸⁹ Miletic, *Flesh*, 17.

⁹⁰ Ibid, 18.

⁹¹ Ibid, 47.

⁹² Ibid, 57.

⁹³ Ibid, 18-20 (cf Sampley, *Flesh*, 113f).

⁹⁴ Sampley, *Flesh*, 96-114.

⁹⁵ Lincoln, "Use", 35.

⁹⁶ Miletic, *Flesh*, 21, 48, 112ff.

⁹⁷ According to Miletic the importance of ch 5.23c is derived from its structural position, ie as the core of vv20-24 (*Flesh*, 19, 23, 26, 43f and 51). He feels with Ramaroson ("L'Eglise", 139) that it is "out of place" and may have been included only because of its inherent importance (?).

⁹⁸ Miletic, *Flesh*, 62.

into play: Adam represents the human race in the old creation while the new Adam does the same in the new creation.⁹⁹ The new Adam saves the 'new Eve'—that is the church—"by first creating it".¹⁰⁰

Miletic's view has definite merits. Thus I would agree that at times the author thinks along the lines of what Miletic calls "Adam speculation". I have attempted to show in my discussion of the use of Ps 8 in Eph 1.20-3 that there too such a framework was presupposed. The new creation is juxtaposed with the old. Although, any mention of Adam is carefully avoided.¹⁰¹ Instead the writer prefers to speak of the old and new man (4.22-4) as well as the "sons of disobedience" (2.1-10). This should caution us against pressing the underlying Adamic framework too hard. In particular it remains doubtful whether Eph 5 pictures the church in terms of a "new Eve". There is no mention of a "first" or "second" wife, as Best points out,¹⁰² nor is it evident that the author gives the Biblical Adam and Eve 'a good press' in a pre-Pauline Jewish way.¹⁰³ There is also no hint of the writer relating Adam to the re-creation of humanity. It appears that Miletic presses the Adamic imagery too much. Perhaps the weightiest criticism is against his contention that the quotation refers not primarily to human marriage but to the Christ-church relationship.¹⁰⁴ The train of thought of vv22-33 as well as of v28 in particular proves the opposite. First, vv28ff form a digression with the purpose of further undergirding the injunction to husbands to love their wives, an injunction which goes beyond comparative material of the time and which consequently needed special backing up.¹⁰⁵ This digression culminates in the quotation and interpretation, thus presupposing that the quoted text relates to the injunction of love. This injunction, which could have been supported purely by pointing to the creation of Eve out of Adam's side, is now placed on a new foundation: the love which Christian husbands are to show towards their wives should now be governed by an awareness of

⁹⁹ Ibid, 58.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 66 and 94ff.

¹⁰¹ Miletic, *Flesh*, 115 expresses surprise at this.

¹⁰² Best, *Body*, 171 and 181 (cf 2 Cor 11.3).

¹⁰³ Miletic, *Flesh*, 115.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 22 and 112.

¹⁰⁵ Consequently it would be beside the point to call vv22-33 a chiasmus (wives-husbands-husbands-wives); *pace* Sampley, *Flesh*, 147 and Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 384. It is better to speak of a pair (wives-husbands), followed by a digression or expansion (husbands), followed by a summary (husbands and wives). Formally this may resemble a chiasmus, but in terms of authorial intent the term *chiasmus* would be misleading.

belonging to the body of Christ which is the church (v30). The writer is still primarily concerned with human marriage.¹⁰⁶

Secondly, v28 which presupposes the content of the quotation, clearly addresses human marriage relationships. Christ and the church (v29) function as an illustration and model rather than forming the main theme which is then backed up by the quotation. This raises the question of how v32—τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο μέγα ἐστίν. ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω εἰς Χριστόν καὶ εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν—should be interpreted and to this we now turn.

The Nature and Referent of the Mystery (v32a)

Τὸ μυστήριον τοῦτο μέγα ἐστίν. It is generally accepted that this phrase should not be translated "this is a great mystery" (RSV) but instead "this mystery is great" or even "there is hidden here a great truth" (NEB and REB). The emphasis falls not on the mysteriousness but on the magnitude of that which has been hidden. This does no injustice to the term "mystery". As Coppens showed, the correlation of mystery and knowledge is also well attested in the Qumran literature.¹⁰⁷ He proposes the following paraphrase: "...the mystery of the conjugal union which unites two bodies in one, is great, that is certain; I, however, call it great in the light of the union of Christ with his Church."¹⁰⁸ This compares with Lincoln who holds that the quotation refers both to human marriage and to the Christ-church relationship, but also that the "writer asserts that he *refers* this citation to Christ and the Church" (my italics).¹⁰⁹ Presumably this would imply an element of interpretation. Does the quotation refer to human marriage or to the Christ-church relationship, or perhaps even both?

Part of the problem is the somewhat abbreviated language of v32. It is not entirely clear, for instance, how to interpret the combination λέγω εἰς. The problem with Coppens' proposal is that his translation

¹⁰⁶ Notice v29 which uses but reverses the language of a 'marriage contract' (Preisigke-Kiesling, *Wörterbuch* I, 460) in order to "set out the husband's duties to his wife" (Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 379). The comparative καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστός (v29) is introduced by way of analogy, not as the main theme.

¹⁰⁷ Coppens, "Mystery", 138.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 147.

¹⁰⁹ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 380. At the same time he guards against an all-embracing allegorisation of the quotation: "He does not mean that every aspect of the citation applies to Christ and the Church."

is difficult to support from the use of this phrase elsewhere.¹¹⁰ In fact, it could be argued that Acts 2.25—Δαυιδ λέγει εἰς αὐτόν, followed by a quotation which is applied to Christ—supports Lincoln's view.¹¹¹ Unfortunately this suggestion is not without problems either. Abbott points out that to render λέγω as "interpret"—Lincoln's implication?—would be unique within the NT.¹¹² Moreover, in order to avoid a wholesale allegorising of the quotation, Lincoln concedes that the author is interested only in its last phrase, καὶ ἔσονται οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα. How precisely can this phrase be said to "refer" to Christ and the church? Would the author have been likely to express the union between Christ and the church as a one flesh union?¹¹³ Is it not more likely that the σάρξ phrase should be applied to vv28f which also speak of σάρξ in anticipation of the quotation? In those verses the writer undoubtedly alludes to or implies human one flesh union on the basis of the narrator's aside in Gen 2.24.¹¹⁴ The Christ-church analogy is just that, an analogy and a model¹¹⁵ but not necessarily the hidden focus of the quotation. Any spiritual understanding of the one flesh union in Gen 2.24 is likely to be a later development as reflected in gnostic documents such as the Acts of Thomas and the Apocryphon of John. While Eph 5.32f may well underlie such later gnostic documents (cf

¹¹⁰ The most common options appear to be "to refer to" (NEB), "with reference to" (NASV), "to be talking about" (NIV) or "to speak concerning" (RSV). Coppens added the notion of "to say so in the light of". Whether he was justified in doing so remains to be explored below.

¹¹¹ Cf also Euripides, *Med*, 453 and Xenophon, *Mem*, 1.5.1 for the combination λέγω + εἰς. For further detail see the section on ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω (below).

¹¹² Abbott, *Ephesians*, 174.

¹¹³ Marcion pointed out that the link between Christ and the church is spiritual, as opposed to the physical union between married partners. Tertullian disagrees with Marcion and argues for seeing the physical union reflected in the relationship between Adam and Eve as complementing rather than contrasting with the spiritual union between Christ and the church (Marcion 5.18). Either view implies rightly that the one flesh union envisaged in Gen 2.24 cannot be transferred directly as an image for the Christ-church union (*Pace Schnackenburg, Epheser*, 260).

¹¹⁴ This is indirectly acknowledged by Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 354 and 379.

¹¹⁵ Lincoln, "Use", 31. The Christ-church analogy has all along been introduced by means of comparative particles (vv22,23,24,25,29) and it would seem best to interpret ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω εἰς Χριστόν καὶ εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν as a reiteration of these comparative phrases before resuming the main line of thought in v33.

Gospel of Philip 60), it would be precarious to read back such notions into Ephesians itself.¹¹⁶

To recognise the possibility that Gen 2.24 may not have been seen by the author as a primary reference to Christ and the church is neither to deny the christological role of v31, nor the possibility that Gen 2 may have been understood as having a secondary christological reference. It is rather to guard against the precipitate assumption that the author must have derived his theological reflection on marriage in Christ and on the phenomenon of the Christ-church relationship from the quoted OT text itself.¹¹⁷ Gen 2.24 may have been quoted as a witness for the old creation, but the writer made the wording his own. There is neither an introductory formula nor any syntactical disruption. The material borrowed from Gen 2 has been completely merged with its new co-text.¹¹⁸ Technically this is different from those instances where a quotation is marked as such (cf 4.8; 5.14; 6.2). We saw that even in cases like Eph 4.8-10, where there is an introductory formula, one ought to resist the temptation of assuming that whatever interpretative activity the NT author may have engaged in, the object of such interpretation must have been the OT text itself.

Whether or not Eph 5 understands Gen 2.24 as a reference—primary or secondary—to Christ and the church needs to be clarified in relation to the *mystery* motif and the ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω phraseology in v32. There is a real possibility that the "mystery" is not the Christ-church union which the writer might have seen prefigured in Gen 2, but the fact that what Gen 2 says about human marriage can be set in parallel to the Christ-church relationship, something the author has done throughout these verses—compare the comparative particles.

This line of thought can be extended. The mystery may well consist in the fact that Christian marriage is no longer based purely

¹¹⁶ For an attempt to relate Ephesians to such a thought world see Fischer, *Tendenz*, *ad loc.* Also Batey, "Gnosticism", 121-7 and Pokorny, *Epheserbrief*, 70 especially for the possibility of a Jewish-gnostic background of Ephesians.

¹¹⁷ Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 260 is of course right when he observes that the majority of recent commentators opted for the view that our author understood Gen 2.24 as a reference to the Christ-church relationship. Nevertheless, this general agreement must not be allowed to create the impression that the evidence is overwhelming—cf the following section on ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω. His own argument that Gen 2.24 has the "sole purpose" in Ephesians of establishing the unity of Christ and church is surely unwarranted.

¹¹⁸ Notice the phrase ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω (v32) as opposed to Μωϋσῆς λέγει—or any introductory formula for that matter—which we might expect if the author had intended to use the quoted text as a theological proof text.

on the natural attraction of the sexes (Gen 2), but also on the foundation of being found "in Christ". It is noteworthy that v30 differs from the otherwise similar statement in ch 4.25 in that it emphasizes the believers' belonging to Christ. It is as if v30 was designed to remind husbands that, having themselves experienced Christ's love, it is only proper that they should imitate it (cf 5.1f). Having brought home this truth, the author proceeds to state the inevitable in v31 in language borrowed from Gen 2: Christian husbands should mirror Christ's love to his church in marriage. Christian husbands, by virtue of having experienced Christ's love, ought to be in a better position to provide love and fulfilment for their wives than would have been true of earlier generations, for example at the time of Gen 2.24.¹¹⁹ Existence in Christ has, throughout the letter, been the hermeneutical parameter for a variety of ethical parenesis.

Ch 1.9f defined the "mystery" as the will of God to "sum up everything through Christ".¹²⁰ In chs 3.3f,9 and 6.19 the term 'mystery' is again linked closely with the gospel. The common tendency to relate the exclusively Ephesian 'mystery' to the inclusion of gentiles into the new people of God is too narrowly focused. The ethnic dimension is no more than an outworking of the essence of the "mystery", that is the gospel itself (cf 3.3f,9; 6.19). Just as the writer in ch 3 applied the central mystery of the gospel to the inclusion of the "nations", so he applies it in ch 5 to Christian marriage and in ch 6 to the child-parent and slave-master relationships. The underlying conception is that existence 'in Christ' has ramifications embracing everything from the ethnic dimension of Jews and gentiles (ch 2.11ff) to the universal dimension of the 'powers' (1.21; 2.2; 3.10; 6.12) on the one side, and household relationships on the other.¹²¹ A

¹¹⁹ The position expounded here is quite different from that of Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 260 who argues that the understanding of Gen 2.24 as a direct reference to Christ and the church forms the writer's principal hermeneutical key. Schnackenburg claims in effect that according to Ephesians there is a direct and deliberate, albeit implied correspondence in the quotation between man and Christ on the one hand and woman and church on the other. This is clear, so Schnackenburg, from the Christ-church terminology which precedes the quotation. What Schnackenburg appears to ignore is that v30 re-directs attention to believers. His case would be stronger if v30—ὅτι μέλη ἐσμὲν τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ—were missing altogether, thus resulting in a straightforward causal link between v29 and the quoted text—for further discussion of this matter cf the following section on ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω.

¹²⁰ For a discussion of this see Moritz, "Summing up", 88-111.

¹²¹ Texts which posit such direct links between household relationships and patterns of state government can be traced back from Philo to Xenophon and Plato.

good case can be made for regarding Eph 5.32 as an application of the gospel mystery to marriage, just as the same mystery has elsewhere been applied to the inclusion of gentiles into God's new society.¹²²

In the context of the entire epistle and in view of the absence of allegorical interpretation from the author's use of OT traditions elsewhere in the epistle, this seems to be a more natural explanation than to assume that the writer suddenly engaged in *sensus plenior* exegesis. The "mystery" consists not primarily of a deeper meaning inherent in the OT text, but of the new dimension added to Christian marital life. The readers are urged that awareness of being "members of his body" (v30) has ramifications in all areas of life, even the intimacy of marriage. This is particularly so because of the conceptual parallel between human marriage and the Christ-church relationship, a parallel which the author illustrates by showing that the wording of Gen 2.24 can be applied to both types of relationship. Coppens calls the author's endeavour at this point "daring and original exegesis".¹²³ I prefer to speak of daring and original theology,¹²⁴ conveyed with the help of OT language. There does not appear to be a need to regard the use of μυστήριον in ch 5 as unique within the epistle.¹²⁵

ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω... - Polemical Overtones?

It has already emerged that whether or not Ephesians understood Gen 2.24 as a reference to Christ and the church hinges to a large extent on v32b. When reading the phrase ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω one cannot avoid thinking of the many occasions when Jesus is reported in the gospels to have countered what he perceived to be misconceptions. Is the

See Lührmann's discussion in "Haustafeln", 90. Opposition to Plato's view was voiced by Aristotle.

¹²² Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 261 is on the right track but too vague when he speaks of the mystery in Eph 5.32 as being "somewhat" related to the mystery expounded in ch 1.9.

¹²³ Coppens, "Mystery", 147.

¹²⁴ I am here going slightly beyond Abbott, *Ephesians*, 174 who agrees to understand the "mystery" as a reference to the comparison of marriage with the Christ-church relationship. It is more than a mere comparison or analogy. Schlier speaks of the Christ-church relationship as *Vorbild* and human marriage as *Nachvollzug* (*Epheser*, 263). Perhaps it is best to conclude that the author of Ephesians regarded Gen 2.24 as an exposition of prototypical marriage—representative of the old creation—whereas marriage inspired by the Christ-church relationship constitutes human marriage in its fullness.

¹²⁵ Caragounis, *Mysterion*, 59.

writer here imitating one of Jesus' favourite solemn introductions? Although there may not be a definite answer to this question, the majority of scholars are agreed that the use of this phrase here sets apart polemically the author's appropriation of the OT text from competing interpretations.¹²⁶ It is difficult to be sure whether he suspected such competing interpretations to be current among his audience, or was thinking in terms of outside influences. In any case, the striking terminology ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω points to a competing understanding. To some degree this has been confirmed earlier on the basis of the evidence from Qumran, the rabbinic texts and the gospels as well as from what can be deduced from the gnostic literature of the second and following centuries.

The study of the first of these two groups showed that Gen 2.24 appears to have been used hardly at all as a proof text for marriage. In comparison the so-called divorce bill enjoyed much more widespread attention. It may well have been this type of situation which caused the author of Ephesians to re-claim Gen 2.24 as a supportive text for the binding character of marriage. The distinctive contribution of Ephesians was to go even further than Gen 2 and to undergird the binding nature of marriage by pointing to the believers' new existence in Christ. This was facilitated by applying the OT marriage imagery to Christ and the church. Both the use of Gen 2.24 and the application of marriage imagery to Christ and the church have parallels in the gospels (Mark 10.7par; Matt 25.1-13) and in the Pauline corpus (1 Cor 6.16; 2 Cor 11.2f).¹²⁷

The influence which Ephesians exerted on the gnostic body of literature surveyed is beyond doubt. What is more difficult to ascertain is how far the gnostic appropriation of Gen 2.24 may reflect the first century thought world of Western Asia Minor. While we can assume that the kind of Christian asceticism attacked in 1 Tim 4.1-3 reflects first century Asia Minor (cf Col 2.16ff), and while it has been suggested that Eph 5.29—"no man ever hates his own flesh"—was targeted against asceticism,¹²⁸ it is by no means certain that Gen 2.24 was exploited by ascetics as early as this.¹²⁹ Lincoln

¹²⁶ See for instance Sampley, *Flesh*, 52 and 87ff; Dibelius-Greeven, *Epheser*, 95; Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 261; Barth, *Ephesians*, 735 as well as Schlier, *Epheser*, 262. Gnlika, *Epheser*, 264 is slightly more cautious.

¹²⁷ 1 Cor 6.16f will have to be consulted in the last section of this chapter which briefly addresses the question of authorship. A more general admonition to honour Christian marriage and to avoid divorce is found in Heb 13.4.

¹²⁸ MacDonald, *Churches*, 118.

¹²⁹ For later texts which use Gen 2.24 see Pagels, "Adam", 155ff.

points to the early presence of androgynous interpretations of Gen 2.24 in Philo.¹³⁰ However, the relevant texts are too vague to enable us to trace later peculiarly gnostic interpretations back to the first century. It is unlikely that the author directed his interpretation against a specifically androgynous understanding of Gen 2.24. Although Ephesians reclaimed Gen 2.24 primarily as a text undergirding marriage, it cannot be ruled out that the writer also interpreted it in direct contrast to some kind of competing gnosticising interpretations.

An alternative explanation would be to argue that the writer wishes to indicate that he is not using the words of Gen 2.24 here in their original sense, that is as a reference to human marriage, but that he is instead borrowing the wording—ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω—to bring out the parallel in between husband-wife relationships and the relationship between Christ and the church. One does well to remember that despite the parallel use of the slightly odd construction λέγει + εἰς in Acts 2.25, Eph 5.32 differs in that it is precisely not Moses—or David in the case of Acts 2—who speaks of Christ and the church; it is the writer himself (ἐγώ) who makes a point about the relevance of the Christ-church relationship for marriage with the help of borrowed OT language.

It is not easy to decide finally between these options. On balance the last option may have the edge in that it succeeds in giving full force to the explicit christological inclusio formed by the repeated combination ὁ Χριστός + ἡ ἐκκλησία (vv29,32) and also to the phrase ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω without having to speculate about the precise nature of potential rival interpretations. If this proposal is adopted, the implication is that any christological understanding of v31 should be attributed to the author's own theological reasoning. There is little if any indication that he understood Gen 2.24 itself as a direct reference to Christ and the church, although this possibility cannot be ruled out. The phrase λέγω + εἰς should probably not be paraphrased "I interpret this text as a reference to Christ and the church", but instead "I use these words to say something about the relevance of the Christ-church relationship for marriage".¹³¹

¹³⁰ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 383.

¹³¹ Gnllka, *Epheser*, 288 n2 is correct when he insists with Abbott that λέγω does not mean "I interpret". V32 may not be an interpretation of Gen 2.24, but the writer's justification for using the quoted words in his own peculiar christological way which differs from any straightforward understanding of Gen 2.24 as a reference to human marriage.

...ἀγαπάτω ὡς ἑαυτόν - *Further OT Reminiscences?*

In a study of underlying traditions in Eph 5.21-33 Sampley notes the similarity in wording between v33 and Lev 19.18b LXX. He argues that the latter influenced the former.¹³² If Sampley is right this might reveal further pointers for the interpretation of the Gen 2 quotation. Lev 19.18b (LXX) and Eph 5.33 read as follows:

Lev: ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ὡς σεαυτόν

Eph: ἕκαστος τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα οὕτως ἀγαπάτω ὡς ἑαυτόν

Evidently only the last three words in the Ephesian version have counterparts in Lev 19.18. However, Sampley points to numerous instances in Jewish literature where a lover addresses his wife as ἡ πλησίον μου (Cant 1.9,15; 2.2,10,13; 4.1,7; 5.2; 6.4 [LXX]) or where texts with the notion "neighbour" are used for the purpose of marriage halakah (Yeb 37b). Sampley also notes Talmudic texts which resemble Eph 5.28f—ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γυναῖκα ἑαυτόν ἀγαπα—in thought. One such text is Ber 24a:

R. Joseph... inquired of Rab Judah: If two persons are sleeping in one bed, how would it be for one to turn his face away... and recite?... He replied: Thus said Samuel: [It is permitted] even if his wife is with him. R. Joseph demurred to this. (You imply, he said) 'His wife', and needless to say anyone else. On the contrary, (we should argue): His wife is like himself [literally like his body], another is not like himself.

and Yeb 60b

Our Rabbis taught: Concerning a man who loves his wife as himself, who honours her more than himself,... Scripture says, and thou shall know thy tent is in peace.¹³³

Sampley's setting of v33 against such a Jewish background is convincing. Nevertheless he overstates his case when arguing that vv28f should also be related to Lev 19.18. That was hardly the author's intention. What can be said is that Sampley has produced further evidence that the author was deeply rooted in Israel's Scriptures; his quotations and allusions are both genuine and knowledgeable. But this problem does not mean that v33 should be seen as a deliberate allusion to Lev 19. All we can conclude is that a Jewish oriented audience would have been in a better position to

¹³² Sampley, *Flesh*, 30-4.

¹³³ Cf San 76b.

appreciate such fine nuances than a wholly gentile audience. Possibly the author wished, yet again, to show those Jewish Christian among his readers that his Christian ethics are by no means incompatible with the strict ethical guidelines previously set by Judaism. To go further would be unwarranted.

Eph 5 and the ἑρὸς γάμος Concept

It is beyond doubt that the author of Ephesians was to some degree acquainted with the imagery of a sacred marriage. He applied it repeatedly to the relationship between Christ and the church. In essence this is comparable with the OT marriage imagery as applied to the covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel (Isa 54.1,5f; 62.4f; Jer 2.2f,32; Ezek 16.23; Hos 2.19f; Mal 2.14). What is less certain is whether Ephesians goes significantly beyond this OT application. To be more precise, does Ephesians envisage the Christ-church relationship as an archetype for human marriage in a way which fundamentally transcends that of the OT?¹³⁴ This is not impossible but would be rather surprising, given his knowledge of the early chapters of Genesis. In Canaanitic fertility cults men "sought to achieve enhanced earthly life and even eternal life" through "intercourse with the divine".¹³⁵ To Hebrew thought this was abhorrent as it meant a deliberate transgression of the natural sphere set by God for mankind. Nevertheless some Hebrew daughters are said to have participated in such fertility cults by entering spiritual marriages with semi-divine 'sons of God'. According to Gen 6.1-4 it was precisely this malpractice of re-enacting the relationship between divine, semi-divine and human in marriage which caused God to set a limit to man's life span at 120 years and to bring about the flood and the near eradication of mankind. Later pseudepigraphic writers showed fascination with the new 'super race' which is thought to have originated from these marriages.¹³⁶ Two New Testament writers, however, refer to the judgment that befell such 'angels' or 'sons of God' (2 Pet 2.4 and Jud 6).

¹³⁴ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 362. Schlier, *Epheser*, 264-76 took the matter further and argued for interpreting the Ephesian ἑρὸς γάμος on the basis of "hellenistic-Jewish gnosticism" (cf Fischer, *Tendenz*, 181ff).

¹³⁵ Wenham, *Genesis* I, 146f.

¹³⁶ Bar 3.26-8; Sir 16.7; Wis 14.7. For a discussion of Baruch in relation to Eph 5 see Batey, "Gnosticism", 121-7; but Batey is not aware of the importance of Gen 6 in the pseudepigraphical literature cited above.

It could be argued that this line of thinking which is attacked in both Testaments is not strictly comparable to that of a sacred marriage between the truly divine and humans. It nevertheless remains true that the OT goes no further than employing marriage imagery to the relationship between Yahweh and Israel. To do so would have encouraged the kind of antediluvian marriage re-enactment which is strongly rejected in Gen 6. Would the author of Ephesians, for whom the Pentateuch and particularly the early chapters of Genesis were not only familiar but Scriptural guides, have developed the OT marriage imagery to a point where the Christ-church relationship is being enacted in human marriage? More specifically, would he have used Gen 2 to that end? This may not be impossible, but it is certainly very unlikely.¹³⁷ Indeed this assumption becomes unnecessary when it is seen that Ephesians has no clear intention to interpret Gen 2.24 as a direct reference to Christ and the church. The Christ-church relationship, though real, functions as an archetype only on the level of model and imagery, not as the basis of ritual enactment. Correspondingly the use of Gen 2.24 in vv31f does not necessarily depend on a notion of a *sensus plenior*; instead it represents the old creation which, although it had a legitimate place for marriage, has now been superseded by the new existence in Christ which in the author's view greatly enhances Christian marriage. If so, the author's understanding of Gen 2.24 is typological, not allegorical.

V30 which forms the framework for the quotation does not liken the husband to Christ and the wife to the church, but simply relates Christian existence to the person of Christ. Its implication is that Christ's attitude towards his church is paradigmatic for Christian marriage. There is no suggestion of understanding Gen 2.24 and the one flesh union it discusses as a direct reference to Christ and the church.¹³⁸ The content of the mystery contemplated in v32 consists not in the reference to Gen 2.24 but in the parallels which can be detected between the relationship of married believers and that of Christ and the church. Given that the writer's understanding of Gen

¹³⁷ That the author follows closely the OT thought is also evident from the cleansing and bathing imagery which may well have a precedent in Ezek 16.8ff (cf Sampley, *Flesh*, 38ff).

¹³⁸ These are specifically the leaving of the parental household by the bridegroom, the love bond and the union itself. Significantly, to state these parallels is not in itself to allegorise Gen 2.24, but to recognise the typological character of marriage in Gen 2.

2.24 itself is probably typological, the application of the phrase *hieros gamos* to Eph 5 is misleading and is best avoided.

CONCLUSION

This chapter set out to examine the significance of Gen 2.24 for the interpretation of Eph 5.31f. From a study of non-Biblical and New Testament sources it emerged that Ephesians may be an attempt to re-claim a text for marriage which threatened to be sidelined in the wake of halakhic discussions about the Mosaic divorce bill. The author's concern is reflected in the fact that he digressed in the middle of his household discourse to accommodate vv30-32. His major theological contribution was to lift Christian marriage from the level of the natural attraction of the sexes to that of being rooted in the experience of Christ. It is this and the fact that human marriage finds a close counterpart in the Christ-church relationship which, for the author, forms the great "mystery". The term *μυστήριον* should probably be translated as "truth". There is no suggestion either of allegory or of a mystical participation in Christ via marriage. His understanding of Gen 2.24 is typological in that it regards marriage before the Christ event as a prefiguring of Christ-centered marriage. The use of *μυστήριον* is not here materially different from its use elsewhere in the epistle where it is used for the impact of the gospel on relationships. Normally the author applies it to the possibility of gentiles enjoying the benefits of the Christ event by being allowed to join with God's people. Here it is also applied to relationships, namely those specified in the household code. There is no emphasis in Ephesians on any *hieros gamos* concept. It is also worth pointing out, lastly, that the digression of vv30-32 relates more directly to the husband's duty to love his wife than to marriage as a whole. The husband is asked to learn from Christ. The responsibility of the wife has already been set out in vv22-24. V33 brings the two sets of admonition together.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT IN EPH 6.2-3

"Honour your father and mother—this is the first commandment with a promise—that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

In some respects the quotation of the fifth commandment at the beginning of ch 6 resembles that of Gen 2.24 a couple of verses earlier. Given that the Ephesian household code, as indeed most of the letter, depends on Colossian parallels,¹ it is noteworthy that the expansions of both Col 3.18f in Eph 5.22-33 and Col 3.20f in Eph 6.1-4 incorporate explicit OT quotations. Whereas Col 3.18 - 4.1 is virtually devoid of OT material, the author of the Ephesian *Haustafel* was at pains to incorporate Pentateuchal material. Even Eph 6.9 betrays a closeness to Lev 25.43 which is not evident to the same extent in Col 4.1.² The writer is also concerned to provide both quotations with a suitable framework. In ch 5 this is provided by v30; in ch 6 it can be observed in the change from κατὰ πάντα τοῦτο γὰρ εὐάρεστόν ἐστιν ἐν κυρίῳ (Col 3.20) to [ἐν κυρίῳ] τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστιν δίκαιον which relates the OT quotation to common ethics.³ This raises at once the suspicion that the author was again deliberately trying to show the continuity between his Christian moral teaching and OT ethics and in this case even contemporary

¹ Munro, "Stratum", 434-7 and *Authority*, 31 agrees in general, but argues unconvincingly that the Ephesian *Haustafel* forms an exception in that it is dependent both on Colossians and Ephesians(!), and secondly because Col 3.18 - 4.1 is later than the remainder of Colossians and the whole of Ephesians. In particular she contends that Col 3.20 forms a conflation of Eph 5.10 with 6.10. Apart from the sheer intricacy of this proposal, Munro does not explain sufficiently how Col 3.18-20 could have resulted on the basis of its Ephesian counterpart(s).

² *Pace* the margin of the Revidierte Elberfelder Übersetzung (1975) which turns the evidence on its head. Better NA²⁶ and NA²⁷.

³ The phrase ἐν κυρίῳ is included in p⁴⁶,⁸, A, B^c, K, P, Ψ and numerous minuscules among which there is the important 1739. It is omitted by B, D*, G, it^{d,e,f,g} and various church fathers. This external evidence would favour the inclusion of the phrase; however, it could be argued that the phrase may have been inserted later to match chs 5.22 and 6.5, or to conform to Col 3.20. But against this points the wording which does not correspond exactly to Eph 5.22 and 6.5. Also, the word order differs from Col 3.22. Thus it is best to retain the longer reading.

Greco-Roman ethics.⁴ Before pursuing this matter, we need to ascertain which OT variant of the fifth commandment the writer had in view. This will be followed by a survey of the role of the fifth commandment and child-parent relationships both inner-Biblically as well as extra-Biblically. A study of the significance of households for early Christians will then lead into an exegesis of Eph 6.1-4. The outline of this chapter is as follows:

The Version of the Fifth Commandment behind Ephesians 6.2f

The Role of the Fifth Commandment in Israel's Scriptures

The Place of the Fifth Commandment in Israel's Bible

The Rationale Underlying the Fifth Commandment

The Significance of the Promise of Reward in Scripture

The Decalogue and Household Codes

Conclusion

The Fifth Commandment in Jewish sources and in the NT

Philo

4 Maccabees

Rabbinic Texts

The Gospels

Conclusion

Households and Household Codes in Early Christianity

Ephesians 6.1-4 Exegetically Reconsidered

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THE VERSION OF THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT BEHIND EPH 6.2F

Uncertainty has arisen as to the precise referent of the phrase ἥτις ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη (v2) because the words ἵνα εὖ σοι γένηται have no counterpart in the MT of Exod 20.12, but can be traced to Deut 5.16 and 22.7.⁵ The problem with assuming that Deuteronomy provided the *Vorlage* is that Ephesians would have had to omit the pronoun σου as well as the phrase ἐνετείλατό κύριος ὁ Θεός σου. These problems disappear when it is recognised that the author used the LXX version of Exod 20.12 which comes closest to the

⁴ For a good survey of such texts see Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 398-402.

⁵ Ellis, *Use*, 152 and 185 opts for Deut 5.16. Martin argues for a conflation of both passages (Lincoln, "Use", 37).

Ephesian version of the commandment. On this assumption the writer only had to replace ἵνα by ἔση and omit γένη, something which was true of the other texts as well. Undoubtedly, therefore, the author used the LXX version of Exod 20.12 into which he inserted the comment ἥτις ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ. This comment is not easy to interpret in its NT setting and will need further study later in this chapter. To enable us to uncover possible reasons as to the author's intention in quoting from Exod 20.12, we must first examine the relevance and main thrust of the commandment to honour one's parents within the OT.

THE ROLE OF THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT IN THE OT

The main reason for this survey is the problematic phrase ἥτις ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ in Eph 6.2. Was the author thinking of the overriding importance of this commandment compared to the others or does πρώτη refer solely to its numerical position within the decalogue? Or yet gain, should the phrase be seen as an expression of the difficulty of keeping the fifth commandment? What does the promise refer to in a first century context, that is after the promise of the land had already been fulfilled? Some light can be shed on these questions by relating Eph 6.2f to the place of the fifth commandment in the OT itself and in extra-Biblical Jewish literature.

The Place of the Fifth Commandment in Israel's Bible

Given the prominent position of this commandment within the decalogue its importance was no doubt seen as being second only to the relationship between God and his people as regulated in the first four commandments. This is undergirded by the importance attributed to it elsewhere in the OT Scriptures. Thus we find that the imagery of the parent-child relationship, regulated in Exod 20.12, is applied elsewhere to the relationship between Yahweh and the Israelites,⁶ something picked up by the writer to the Hebrews (ch 12.5-11). Gamberoni succeeded in showing that this commandment underlies a considerable number of other OT texts which do not explicitly mention it.⁷ One text which does refer explicitly to the commandment is Lev 19.3. It is bracketed by statements about God's holiness, the Sabbath and the warning not to turn to idols—cf the first four commandments. Noticeably the piel imperative of כבד

⁶ Deut 1.31; 8.2-5; Prov 3.11f.

⁷ Gamberoni, "Elterngebot", 75-84. Cf Prov 19.26; 20.20; Sir 3.1-16; 7.27f.

(Exod 20.12) has been replaced by a form of יָרָא which is normally reserved for the proper attitude shown towards God, thus reiterating the affinity between the command to honour one's parents and the preceding commandments in the decalogue. Here as elsewhere in the OT social responsibility is seen as a direct outworking of a proper attitude towards God. The correlation of *fear* (יָרָא) and *reward* of long life appears twice in Prov (9.10f; 10.27). Possibly it influenced Eph 6.1f one way or another.

Perhaps the most compelling feature of the fifth commandment is precisely the promise quoted by the author. The promise made in connection with the second commandment is not strictly speaking attached to the commandment itself. Therefore the fifth commandment is the only one within the decalogue and the first in the OT which, if obeyed, brings with it an explicit reward. The fifth commandment is clearly the most prominent of the 'horizontal' commandments in the decalogue, that is numbers five to ten.

The Rationale Underlying the Fifth Commandment

It has occasionally been stated that Exod 20.12 implies that "parents are the visible representatives of God for the exerting of his authority".⁸ This is no doubt theologically correct as כָּבֵד is often applied in the OT to God or his representatives such as kings and prophets (cf Jdg 9.9; 1 Sam 2.30; 15.30; Prov 3.9; Isa 29.13). Nonetheless, it forms only part of the background of the commandment. On the basis of texts such as Exod 21.15,17; Lev 20.9 and Deut 27.16 it would seem appropriate to regard the protection of parents "from being driven out or abused after they could no longer work"⁹ as its major background. It is not those who stand under the *patria potestas*, but those exerting it who are at the centre of the commandment.¹⁰ The penalty for a son who maltreated or rebelled against his parents was stoning (Deut 21.28ff). Durham concludes that this was precisely because rebellion against parents was seen to amount to disrespect for Yahweh.¹¹ The death penalty was imposed also in cases of idol worship (Deut 17.7) and suspected treason (Num 14.10). Hadoram was stoned because he was responsible for forced labour and so perceived to be an enemy of the people (1 Kgs 12.18). Disrespect for one's parents was therefore put

⁸ Kremers, "Stellung", 156-61.

⁹ Childs, *Exodus*, 418.

¹⁰ Noth, *Exodus*, 165.

¹¹ Durham, *Exodus*, 292. Similar Cassuto, *Exodus*, 246. Cf Exod 21.15 and Deut 21.18-21.

on a par with treason and idol worship. As disrespect for parents is likely to have been a more frequent occurrence than treason or public idol worship, it would appear that it may well have been the example par excellence for the importance of obeying God's commandments as such. Furthermore, in ancient Israel single households more often than not included three generations or more.¹² In view of this, the practical value of Exod 20.12 can hardly be overrated.

The Significance of the Promise of Reward in Scripture

One of the peculiarities surrounding the fifth commandment is the fact that it entails the same promise of prolonged life as the commandment to let the bird mother go when one finds a nest and takes the younger ones (Deut 22.7). The concept that leading a righteous life will result in an honourable position in society, riches and long life is also found in 1 Chron 29.28.¹³ Another typical example is Ps 91.16 which argues that those who turn to God will naturally experience his protection and a long life. Clearly Deut 22.7 is the most puzzling of these references. Why should the commandment to let a mother bird go free entail the same reward as the fifth commandment?¹⁴ It may well be that the clause which promises the reward of long life presupposes that family relationships ought to function as microcosms of the nation as a whole. This would explain the generosity expressed in the promised reward.¹⁵ Successful conduct of a God-fearing nation requires respect for God's will in the small unit of family ties. Obeying God's commandments is not negotiable on the grounds that they differ in terms of importance (cf Exod 20.12 and Deut 22.7); it is a matter of principle. Hence we find that the same promise is attached to the fifth commandment as to the 'bird mother commandment'. The difference between the two primarily is in the nature of the punishment for disobedience. For the relationship between God and his people this difference remains relevant. While the equality in terms of reward

¹² Hyatt, *Exodus*, 213.

¹³ Philo, *De Spec* 2.262 spiritualised the reference to long life and made it apply to eternal life.

¹⁴ MRDeut 6 argues that there is no doubt that the fifth commandment is the hardest of all, whereas the command to let the bird mother go free is the easiest. By providing both with the same promise of reward God makes the point that all commandments are equally important, though they may differ with respect to the difficulty involved in fulfilling them.

¹⁵ Philo, *De Spec* 2.262 omits the reference to the land and spiritualises the reward, thus referring it to eternal life. Cf in the Mishnah Hul 142a and EljR 24 which refers to the commandment to let the bird mother go in Deut 22.7.

reflects the basic principle that God's commandments are not negotiable—regardless of the seeming importance of individual commandments—the stark contrast in punishment underlines the centrality of the commandment to honour one's parents. This is because it lies at the heart of family relationships and hence a functioning society. This view was certainly prevalent in the first century AD as is clear from the writings of both Philo and Josephus.¹⁶

The Decalogue and the Household Codes

Exod 20 addresses the head of a Jewish household who is to instruct "son, daughter, male and female slave" to observe the Sabbath (v10). Note the emphasis on "within your gates" and on "your neighbour's household" (v17), both of which presuppose the importance of the socially cohesive family unit. The triple reference to the neighbour in the tenth commandment shows how the decalogue moves from the individual's relationship to God on to family relationships and again on to neighbourhood relationships. Given the particular mention of parents, sons, daughters and slaves and by implication married partners—cf the seventh commandment—the decalogue provides all the ingredients needed for a household code of the type encountered in Eph 5.21 - 6.9. In view of the explicit quotation from Exod 20.12 and the frequent dependence on the OT elsewhere in the letter, it is likely that the decalogue exerted at least some influence on Eph 5 and 6 and possibly on Philo.¹⁷

Conclusion

Within the decalogue, and even within the whole Pentateuch, the fifth commandment takes pride of place among the 'horizontal' commandments which regulate social relationships. It provides a hinge between the first four commandments to do with God's holiness and the remaining commandments in that the parents to be honoured stand in the place of God and mediate his will to the entire household. While its attached promise of a long life does not necessarily mark it out as supreme, the punishment that resulted from disobedience puts it on a par with the worst crimes reported in the OT.

¹⁶ Philo, *De Spec Leg*, 2.232 and *Hypothetica*, 7.2. Josephus, *Con Ap*, 1.12.60; 2.18.178 and 25.204.

¹⁷ See especially Philo, *Hypothetica*, 14. Also *De Decal*, 165-7; *De Spec Leg*, 2.227.

The decalogue may well have played a formative role in the development of what came to be called household codes. This is suggested by the closest extra-Biblical first-century parallels to the Ephesian *Haustafel* furnished by Philo's writings. We must therefore turn more specifically to Philo's appropriation of the thrust of Exod 20.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT IN JEWISH SOURCES AND IN THE NT

It is well known that Philo's writings provide the closest parallels to the NT household codes. A text which has been largely ignored but which should also be taken into account is found in 4 Maccabees. This writing is likely to originate from a similar thought world and time, though not the same geographical area as that of Philo.¹⁸ We shall see how this text relates to Philo's *Haustafeln* and extant rabbinic sources.

Philo

"Honour therefore, he says, next to God, your father and your mother" (*De Spec* 235)¹⁹

In quoting from Exod 20.12 in this way, Philo attributes to parents a position "midway between the natures of God and man" (*De Spec* 225). The parent-child relationship is said to be comparable to that of "rulers above subjects, and masters above servants" (*De Spec* 226 and *Decal* 165-7). Philo postulates in this connection two "orders" with parents belonging to the upper order. More importantly, Philo's 'code' overlaps significantly with the NT household codes. This includes the parent-child relationship and that between master and slave. In view of the quotation from Exod 20, there is little doubt that Philo's pairings have been influenced to some extent by the decalogue. This is of course not to deny Greek influence on Philo's

¹⁸ Anderson, "4 Maccabees", 531-42 notes the following points: (1) a likely date of between 19-54 AD (cf Nickelsburg, *Literature*, 226 and Schürer, *History*, 591); (2) the form of a philosophical discourse which shows a clear familiarity with Platonic ideas; (3) the claim that fidelity to the Jewish Law is the best form of attaining the Greek ideal of virtue. Interesting is the suggestion that this writing may be linked to a diaspora synagogue in Asia Minor (following Norden, *Kunstprosa* I, 419; cf Freudenthal, *Josephus*, 4-36). This conjecture, if correct, would take us close to the type of religious environment which may provide the backcloth for Ephesians. But cf Schürer, *History* III, 589.

¹⁹ Cf Bab Mez 32a; Kid 30b-31a and San 5a.

Haustafel;²⁰ however, the link with Exod 20 is more specific and direct and probably more deliberate.²¹

When discussing the role of the fifth commandment in Israel's Scriptures it emerged that in all likelihood the commandment was thought to apply not just to young children but primarily, to adult children of ageing parents. Philo's discussions of parent-children relationships coheres with this understanding. Parents are said to be deserving of their children's honour on the basis that they are seniors (*De Spec*, 227); they are the "old ones" (*Decal*, 167). Josephus too deduces from the commandment that parents should be honoured "because God is the most ancient of all" (*Con Ap* II, 206). The view that the commandment relates primarily to aging parents re-appears even more clearly in rabbinic traditions²² and can be assumed to have been the norm in a variety of strands of first century Judaism.

One significant difference between Philo's 'two orders' and Ephesians is his concept that in each of the three pairings the superior partner deserves being honoured by the 'inferior' one, a view which he shared with others.²³ Whereas Eph 6.1-9 applies the same principle of strict subordination, ὑπακούετε, to the parent-child and master-slave relationships, marriage is said to be characterised by a mutual respect, ὑποτασσόμενοι, although only the need for the wife's respect for her husband is brought out explicitly. Philo, following a long tradition going back to Aristotle, superimposed a rather rigid framework on household relationships which in Ephesians is cushioned somewhat by the demand for husbands to love their wives and by the different choice of verb.²⁴ It is at this

²⁰ Gnlika, "Traditionen", 409 speaks of the Greek "Umgebung". Cf the pattern of the three-fold pairing in Philo's *Hypothetica*, 7.3.

²¹ Despite essential similarities—cf the two orders—between Aristotle's three-fold pairing freeman-slave; male-female; man-child (*Polit* I, 1253b, 9-14) and the occurrence of the three-fold pattern in Philo's defence of Judaism (*Hypothetica*, 7.3), Philo primarily argues from the decalogue, thus showing that Jewish ethics are by no means inferior to Greco-Roman views on the importance of household management. For the view that the household code of 1 Peter is primarily apologetic see Balch, *Wives*, 65-76.

²² In the Talmud see Tos Kid 1.11; Sed EljR 24 and Kid 32. However, the Mishnah defines a rebellious and stubborn son who is culpable as a boy during puberty (San 8.1).

²³ *Hypothetica*, 7.3; Josephus, *Con Ap*, 2.24.199 and already Aristotle, *Polit*, 1.1253 and 1259.

²⁴ An alternative view would of course be to regard Eph 5.21 as the heading for the entire *Haustafel*, rather than as a directive for marriage in particular. Even so the fact remains that by omitting ὑπακούειν from v22 Ephesians refrains from comparing the slave-master and child-parents relationships with that between wife and husband.

point that Philo's and Josephus' indebtedness to Greek philosophers colours their appropriation of the household concept attested in the decalogue to an extent which cannot be found in Ephesians. Our author may have been more concerned with Judeo-Christian continuity in ethical matters than with interaction between Christianity and Greco-Roman society (cf 1 Peter).

4 Maccabees

"For the Law takes precedence over benevolence to parents and will not betray virtue for their sake; it takes precedence over love for a wife and reproves her for transgression; it overrules love for children and punishes them for wrongdoing; and it exercises its authority over intimate relationships with friends and rebukes them for evil" (4 Macc 2.10-3)

The benefit of this text for our purposes is two-fold. First, it features what could broadly be termed a household code. The pairings include parents-children, spouses and friendship bonds. These parallels with the Ephesian *Haustafel* are unquestionably closer than those of the famous Stoic text by Epictetus (*Diss*, 17.31) adduced by Weidinger.²⁵ Significantly 4 Maccabees considers, at least in part, reciprocal relationships—specifically those between parents and children. This is different from *Diss*, 17 which concentrates only on one party in each relationship.²⁶ These differences are not surprising given the scepticism towards Stoic concepts evident especially in ch 5.²⁷ Second, this text may bring us within range of the thought world of the 'Ephesian' environment. To be precise, the author's view that Law-based reason controls rather than eradicates passions, a view which differs from Stoicism (but cf 5.23) could be seen as an attempt by a Jewish philosopher under significant Greek influence to deal with the ethical libertinism which pervaded large parts of the cultic life in Asia Minor.

In the author's argument Law and reason are compatible. As "reason is master of the passions" (v9), "Law takes precedence over benevolence to parents." Here the author is thinking of the decalogue. He quotes the tenth commandment (Exod 20.17) in v5.²⁸

²⁵ This text mentions the individual's obligations towards the gods, parents, brothers, country and foreigners. There is no mention of marriage nor of the master-slave relationship.

²⁶ Rengstorff, "Mahnungen", 131-45 and Schröder, *Haustafeln*.

²⁷ See Anderson, "4 Maccabees", 538.

²⁸ Indeed the entire chapter bristles with allusions to Exod 20-3 and other part of the Pentateuch (v5 - Exod 20.17; v9 - Gen 39.7ff; vv9f - Deut 15.9; 22.30; Exod

Although the link between the decalogue and the 'household code' is not as direct in 4 Maccabees as it is in Philo, this confirms nevertheless that in first century 'Jewish hellenistic' thought the two were never far away from each other. It is quite possible that the writer's comment on "benevolence to parents" was sparked off indirectly by the fifth commandment. It might be objected that he did not quote this commandment as he did in v5. The reason is undoubtedly that an explicit quotation or indeed an allusion would have caused a problem. The author's dilemma was that he wanted to show that benevolence to parents represents passion and so had to yield to the Law. But the decalogue itself called for benevolence towards parents (Exod 20.12). The fifth commandment calls for what the author of 4 Maccabees would have classified as "passion", that is something which is secondary in importance to the Law. While he could exploit the tenth commandment for his *Law versus passion* dualism (v5), quoting the fifth commandment would have been counter-productive. The main point to be noted is the author's interest in the relationship between Law and benevolence to parents. In the Mishnah there is a slight shift in so far as attention is turned towards the specific actions by children towards parents which necessitate punishment.

Rabbinic Texts

In discussing Exod 21.15 ("Whoever hits his father or mother must be put to death"), San 11.1 adds the proviso that hitting one's parents only results in prosecution if a wound is inflicted. Similarly, while cursing one's dead parents results in culpability, hitting one's dead parents does not, as it is impossible to wound a dead person.²⁹

Other texts focus on the extent of honour to be given to parents. While it would be dangerous to generalise, to the modern reader the extent of casuistry contained in these texts seems astonishing.³⁰ This sometimes takes the form of establishing a hierarchy of laws. Thus Yeb 5b argues that keeping the Sabbath is more important than

22.24; Lev 25.36ff; v14 - Deut 20.19; Exod 23.4f; v17 - Num 16.23ff; v19 - Gen 34; v20 - Gen 49.7).

²⁹ For parallels see M^ekhExod 21.17 and in the bSan 85b and Ket 103a. In the OT see Exod 21.17,15; Lev 20.9; Deut 21.18-21; 27.16.

³⁰ See especially Bab Mec 2.10; GenR 39.7; Sif Lev 19.3; bYeb 62. This phenomenon is of course not restricted to strands of rabbinic Judaism; Crouch, *Origin*, 114 points out that it is also noticeable in various Stoic and popular philosophical works (cf Cicero, *De Off*, 3.90). Paul was skeptical of the extent to which many pagans held their parents in esteem (Rom 1.30).

honouring one's parents. According to Kid 32a a burial takes precedence over giving one's father a drink.³¹ Rather surprisingly, in these texts the fifth commandment takes second place to other obligations on more than one occasion. This is a far cry from Ecclus 3.3-5 which attributes an atoning effect to honouring one's parents. Both the date and the selection of the traditions preserved in these rabbinic sources is questionable, so they must not be used uncritically to reconstruct first century views. Nevertheless, it is at least possible that the tendency, observed in 4 Maccabees, of driving a wedge between the formal requirements of the Law and the spirit of exercising benevolence towards parents found its way into some rabbinic strands. This would seem to be suggested also by the controversies between Jesus and the religious authorities as portrayed particularly in Mark 7par.

The Gospels

In Jesus' attack on the Scribes and Pharisees according to Mark 7par, the fifth commandment is linked with the imperative not to curse one's parents. It is also connected with Jesus' reported criticism of the practice of designating property as sacred and dedicated to God, thus excluding one's parents from the right to benefit from it.³² In case the son later regretted this vow, the Mishnah makes it clear that it cannot be invalidated, but remains binding.³³ This coheres with Mark 7.12 which has Jesus say to the scribes that in this situation "he is no longer allowed to do anything for his father or mother".

The main insights to be gained from Mark 7 are, first, that Jesus is portrayed as implying that the scope of the fifth commandment includes material provision and hence that it applies to adult children. Secondly, the implication is that the religious establishment of his day was in grave danger of invoking a tradition against him "which was capable of violating the Law of God."³⁴ Perhaps even more significant is the observation that Mark 7.10par and 10.7par feature the same combination of quotations (Exod 20.12; Gen 2.24) which appear in the Ephesian *Haustafel* (5.31 and 6.2). This raises the

³¹ Ideally, the text suggests, the son can arrange for someone else to take the burial so that he himself can "honour" his father.

³² This practice is attested in an inscription translated by Fitzmyer in "Quorban", 60-5. Cf Lane, *Mark*, 250f.

³³ Ned 6. According to other texts the withdrawal of help by way of this Quorban practice extended also to matters other than finance and property such as personal care and religious duties.

³⁴ Lane, *Mark*, 250.

possibility that Ephesians not only addresses a situation of ethical laxity similar to that criticised in the Gospels, but that it attempts to combat it with the help of the same Scriptural weapons. However, given the distance between the two quotations in Mark and Matthew we cannot go as far as assuming a widespread early Christian tradition which combined the two texts. Nevertheless, the noteworthy fact remains that both Gospels related both quotations to what they perceived to be malpractices by the opposing religious establishment.

Conclusion

A review of Philo's *Haustafeln* showed that his pairings of 'superior/inferior' persons are linked to some extent with the decalogue. This is consistent with Eph 6.2f. It also emerged that Philo, among others, agreed that the fifth commandment, far from being restricted to children, referred primarily to the attitude to be shown by adult children towards their aging parents. Moreover, Philo imposed a superior/inferior order on all social relationships, including marriage, something that does not apply to the same extent in Eph 5.22-33. A further 'Jewish hellenistic' text (4 Maccabees) which proved to be much closer to Ephesians in date, geography, content and even religious climate than the traditionally adduced Stoic texts, revealed a concern to show that Law takes precedence over passion even in the case of honouring one's parents. It became evident that the fifth commandment was probably not quoted precisely because it combined 'Law' and 'passion'. Rabbinic texts showed a slight shift in emphasis in that the primary concern was to define the precise circumstances which warranted punishment for having failed to honour one's parents. The Gospels portray Jesus as having attacked his contemporary religious leaders for reflecting such an attitude.

None of the texts studied offers enough hard evidence to reconstruct the thought climate which occasioned the Ephesian household code. Perhaps the likeliest option is to assume that the specific quotation of the fifth commandment was aimed at addressing a situation in which child-parent relationships were lax. This would be in keeping with the findings that the quotation in Eph 5.31 was almost certainly occasioned by perceived ill-practices. Even if the same applies here, this still leaves open numerous details. Given that the fifth commandment was traditionally understood as addressing adult children, who are the "children" addressed in Eph 6.1? What is the nature of the submission required? Why did the author include the promise of long life? These and other questions need to be

addressed. But first we must examine the role of household codes in the first century Roman world.

HOUSEHOLDS AND HOUSEHOLD CODES IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY

There is no need to repeat in great detail the findings of numerous scholars on the subject.³⁵ But it is worthwhile recalling the social importance which households played in the life of Roman citizens and early Christians.

In the Roman world the *oikonomia* was seen to be one of the three main social categories, the others being *politeia* and *koinonia*. Having traced possible Stoic traditions mediated via Jewish-hellenistic sources, Lührmann identified the main features of the *oikonomia* as being "autonomy of the household and the unity of production and consumption".³⁶ Tidball draws attention to the Durkheimian significance of religion for the household: practically speaking, it served to tie together the "soul of the family".³⁷ No doubt this can also be assumed for the situation presupposed in Ephesians. In fact, in Ephesians this 'Durkheimian effect' is related explicitly to being ἐν Χριστῷ or ἐν κυρίῳ, the underlying assumption being that the addressees share in a new existence built on the foundation of Christ (2.15,20; 4.24 - cf especially 5.21,22; 6.1,4,5,7).

It has long been debated whether the household was regarded as a model for the ancient state. Xenophon and Plato answered in the affirmative while Aristotle denied this concept.³⁸ In Roman times Augustus made use of the implicit paternalism of households and the emotional dimension inherent in them in order to promote himself as the 'pater familias of the empire'.³⁹ This presupposes that by the time Christianity arrived, the household concept had long reached paramount importance as a foundational social unit of society. For this reason it is not easy to agree with Lührmann and MacDonald that the household codes of Ephesians, Colossians and 1 Peter mark out these epistles as belonging to the "second phase" of early

³⁵ For recent literature especially in relation to the traditional argument of a Stoic background of early Christian *Haustafeln* see Rengstorff, "Mahnungen", 131-45; Schröder, *Haustafeln*; Crouch, *Origin*; Balch, *Wives*, MacDonald, *Churches*, 102-20; Yoder, *Politics*, 163-92 and Lührmann, "Haustafeln", 83-97 and also Verner, *Household*.

³⁶ Lührmann, "Haustafeln", 89.

³⁷ Tidball, *Sociology*, 81.

³⁸ Lührmann, "Haustafeln", 90.

³⁹ Tidball, *Sociology*, 79.

Christianity, which consisted of a period of "consolidation".⁴⁰ The vital issue is not so much chronology as the main thrust of Christian household codes. In other words, if, as Balch argues, the code preserved in 1 Peter is primarily apologetic, what is the main purpose of the Ephesian household code?

MacDonald argues that the Colossian *Haustafel* preserves at least some advice for Christians' attitude towards outsiders, whereas in Ephesians "there is no explicit mention of dealings with outsiders."⁴¹ The difference lies perhaps in the differing ethnic make-up of the communities addressed. Whereas Colossians is concerned with the standing of Christians in a pagan context, Ephesians turns its attention more to the new people of God in relation to God's old people, thus pushing other issues somewhat into the background. Nevertheless, the household codes play essentially the same function in both epistles, that of giving guidelines for family life. They are directed to 'insiders', as MacDonald rightly stresses.⁴² It is anachronistic to speak of integration into community life or consolidation of the Christian position within Greco-Roman society as the main thrust of these codes. Integration of insiders has already taken place. Consolidation of the Christian community in the midst of a secular society is not, or not yet, a pressing matter. The aim is simply to spell out what is, in the author's view, befitting to those whose existence is based ἐν Χριστῷ. Such instruction must be seen against the background of numerous reports in Acts and in the Pauline corpus of entire households having come to faith⁴³ and of households hosting Christian assemblies.⁴⁴ Filson rightly observes that the "apostolic church can never be properly understood without constantly bearing in mind the contribution of the house church".⁴⁵ What, then, are the uniquely Christian contributions made by NT household codes?

⁴⁰ Lührmann, "Haustafeln", 90 and MacDonald, *Churches*, 102-22. Lührmann also argues that household codes eventually became „Gemeindeordnungen“ (95). Similar Gnika, "Traditionen", 408 and Robinson, "Hodayot-Formel", 222-5 who claims that „sich im Schlussteil des paulinischen Briefkorpus ein Schema herauskristallisiert, das das Gemeindeleben als Ganzes betrifft und sich dann in den späteren Kirchenordnungen fortsetzt.“

⁴¹ MacDonald, *Churches*, 108f.

⁴² Ibid, 109.

⁴³ Acts 10.1; 11.48; 16.13-5 and vv31-4; 18.8; 1 Cor 1.16.

⁴⁴ Acts 1.13; 2.46; 5.42; 12.12; Rom 16.4,5,14,15,23; 1 Cor 16.19; Col 4.15 and Phlm 2.

⁴⁵ Filson, "Significance", 105-12.

A uniquely Jewish (Philo) or Christian (Eph 5 and 6) feature is the recourse to the decalogue. In the case of Philo this resulted from his apologetic motif in rejecting slander against Jewish immorality in household management. In Ephesians the author was more interested in maintaining ethical continuity between Judaism and Christianity as a way of defending the Christian sect against its mother religion. What else can be said to be specifically Christian features of the NT household codes? Despite the criticisms directed at Weidinger's attempt to find the precursor of NT household codes in Stoic sources, a comparison between the two types of literature helps to bring out the specifically Christian elements.

Yoder discusses the matter at great length and suggests the following differences. First, the Stoic call to morality is addressed to man's nature. It urges the individual to live up to whatever function, such as fatherhood, is required. The Stoic concern is with fellow man insofar as he stands in a relationship to oneself. Stoic codes often conceive of relationships as one-way functions rather than as pairs of interrelating individuals. The NT *Haustafeln*, in comparison, explicitly encourage reciprocal relationships. Correspondingly, while Stoic moral codes primarily address individuals, the NT codes shift the focus away from the individual's potential to the social function of community/family members within the community. Second, Stoic reasoning seeks to unfold 'what is',⁴⁶ whereas the accumulation of imperatives in the NT codes resembles to a much greater extent the apodictic Law of the Hebrew Bible. This is underlined by striking differences in vocabulary.⁴⁷ Third, perhaps the most significant difference between the two types of texts consists of the address to both partners in each pairing in the NT codes. In fact, the socially inferior partner is addressed first, something not paralleled in the Stoic material. This last observation by Yoder can be reinforced by pointing to Philo's and Josephus' emphasis on parental power and rights to the virtual exclusion of parental obligations.⁴⁸ This difference must be accounted for.

A promising line of enquiry may be to recall 1 Thes 2.11f where Paul presupposes the significance of the Jewish household concept for matters of religious instruction. Judaism was characterised by the father's obligation to pass on to their sons the traditions received from their own fathers (Deut 4.9; 6.7,20-25 and 11.19-21).⁴⁹ One of

⁴⁶ Yoder, *Politics*, 172.

⁴⁷ For details cf *ibid*, 173.

⁴⁸ Schrage, *Ethik*, 255.

⁴⁹ Cf Riesner, *Lehrer*, 102ff.

the chief objectives of the fifth commandment within Deuteronomy is to safeguard the parents' role in the transmission of faith through the generations.⁵⁰ No doubt the implied willingness of the children to receive and obey these teachings accounts in part for the reward attached to the commandment. It takes little imagination to detect a similar function households in the Ephesian context of the *Haustafel* and ch 6.5 in particular.

To sum up, whereas the Stoic household codes may have provided a formal predecessor to NT codes—possibly mediated via Jewish hellenistic sources⁵¹—Eph 5.21 - 6.9; Col 3.18 - 4.1 and 1 Pet 2.18 - 3.7 differ in content. Here the OT and the decalogue are likely to have exercised some influence.⁵² Whereas, for Plutarch, brotherly love took precedence over love for parents (*De Frat*, 480), the decalogue, in keeping with current practices in the ancient semitic orient,⁵³ urged children to honour their parents. The writer of Ephesians, among other NT witnesses, and Philo, elected to follow this path.

EPH 6.1-4 EXEGETICALLY RECONSIDERED

We are now in a position to clarify four major exegetical issues: (1) What is the significance of the age of the "children" addressed in v1? (2) How are Christian ethics related to the Law of Scripture? (3) In what sense is the fifth commandment the "first" or "foremost" commandment? (4) What is the pedagogical function of the promised reward?

The Scope of the Commandment

This question is closely linked with the nature of the submission demanded by the author. We have noticed already that the term used to describe the child-parent and slave-master relationships differs from that which describes the attitude to be adopted by wives towards their husbands.⁵⁴ This has caused commentators to assume

⁵⁰ Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, 170.

⁵¹ Lührmann, "*Haustafeln*", 83-97.

⁵² The fact that the OT hardly features in Colossians shows not that it had no influence on the author of Colossians, but that he had little interest in alluding to it, possibly because of the particular audience he envisaged.

⁵³ See von Soden, *Altorientalistik*, 69.

⁵⁴ Cf Titus 2.5; 1 Pet 3.1; Eph 5.21; Col 3.18. In 1 Pet 3.6 κύριος calls for the verb ὑπακούω which is often used as a *terminus technicus* for faith, ie the response to the gospel (Rom 6.16; Phil 2.12; 2 Thes 1.8; 3.14).

automatically that young children are in view. No doubt this makes good sense. The enjoinder to fathers in v4 to "bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" demands the inclusion of young children among the τέκνα. This is further supported by other household codes which typically include young children and slaves. It is therefore very likely that young children are at least included in vv1,4. Why, in that case, should the point be raised at all?

In the OT, in hellenistic Jewish sources as well as in rabbinic circles the fifth commandment was interpreted as addressing adult children.⁵⁵ Given this, the use of Exod 20.12 in the Ephesian household code is somewhat surprising.⁵⁶ In the parallel code in Col 3.20 Gärtner holds that the author is thinking of adult children.⁵⁷ However, it has already become clear that in both codes younger children are at least included. Was the author unaware of the thrust of Exod 20.12 or did he deliberately ignore it? Who are the children envisaged? Taking the cue from Lincoln's observation that the author is more interested in relationships than in age, we turn to the use of τέκνον within the NT.

It is instructive to examine those passages which feature paidion and τέκνον side by side. Mark 7.27-30, for instance, reports a Syro-Phoenician woman bringing her θυγάτριον (v25), to whom she then refers as παιδίον. Jesus, however, in widening the scope to include the "children of Israel" twice uses the term τέκνον, thus denoting the divine provision for and relationship with Israel. Luke 2.40,48 provides another example. V40 refers to the child Jesus as παιδίον, whereas the twelve year old who is so conscious of his relationship with the Father (v49) is described as τέκνον (vv41,48). Lastly, Luke 11.7 uses παιδίον for the children who sleep in their parents' bed, while v13 (τέκνον) expresses family relationship rather than age. Matt 10.21 similarly mentions τέκνα who stand up against and kill their own parents.

These observations can be substantiated from the Pauline corpus. When Paul wants to emphasise young age as symbolic of a lack of spiritual maturity, he prefers παιδίον (1 Cor 14.20). In contrast, when he wishes to stress the spiritual dimension of the nurturing relationship between himself as mother and his converts or children,

⁵⁵ Safrai-Stern, *Compendia*, 771.

⁵⁶ Strangely this phenomenon has not been recognised by commentators. The major commentaries neither address the scope of the fifth commandment in this respect, nor the age of the children mentioned in Eph 6. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 403 notes that teknon denotes relationship rather than age.

⁵⁷ Gärtner, *Familienerziehung*, 36f.

he employs the term τέκνον, as part of the imagery of a mother caring for her children (1 Thes 2.7).⁵⁸ Eph 6.1,4 can and should equally be interpreted as envisaging primarily the religious dimension of the relationship between parents and children irrespective of age. When it is appreciated that in contemporary Greco-Roman and Jewish societies numerous generations lived successively, and in part simultaneously, under one roof or at least in close proximity, the distinction between young children, teenagers and adults who care for their aging parents becomes in any case rather blurred and less important. Consequently, the question is not, as some older commentaries have us believe, whether the children in view are proof for the practice of infant baptism in the early church. Instead the question has to be, what is the religious dimension indicated by the author?

Throughout Judaism bringing up children entailed the passing on of the traditions of the fathers and the Law.⁵⁹ It is interesting to note that in Deuteronomy it is precisely the fifth commandment which plays a major role in safeguarding this aspect of bringing up children.⁶⁰ Except for the specific contents passed on, much the same applied to large parts of the first century Greco-Roman world.⁶¹ Given the specific quotation from the decalogue following the christological reference, the religious dimension of obeying one's parents for our author consists of the children's receptiveness to the teaching of the father whose role it was to hand down the Judeo-Christian tradition. This means that the author shifted the emphasis of the fifth commandment away from the responsibility to care for one's aging parents to the responsibility to receive and obey the Christian teaching provided by the father. It might be argued that this necessarily implies that the children addressed are younger than those targeted by the fifth commandment. While this is no doubt true, the author is not concerned with age but with the continuity of the Christian teaching within the family context. This straightforward

⁵⁸ Every single reference to tekna in the Pauline corpus apart from the household codes denotes relationship, ie the spiritual relationship between Paul or God the Father and Paul's converts/the children or alternatively the identification of individuals with either Christ or the evil powers (Rom 8.16f,21; 9.7f; 1 Cor 4.14,17; 7.14; 2 Cor 6.13; 12.14; Gal 4.19,25,27,28,31; Eph 2.3; 5.1,8; Phil 2.15,22; 1 Thes 2.11; 1 Tim 1.2,18; 3.4,12; 5.4; 2 Tim 1.2; 2.1; Titus 1.4,6; Phlm 10).

⁵⁹ For a detailed discussion see Riesner, *Lehrer*, 102-10.

⁶⁰ Mayes, Deuteronomy, 170.

⁶¹ It was not until the second century that the patria potestas gradually faded in significance (Carcopino, *Life*, 76-80).

understanding of Eph 6.1f must not be sacrificed by attempting to read the thrust of Exod 20.12 back into Eph 6.

Christian Ethics and OT Law

The use of the term δίκαιος as part of the phrase "it is right" is familiar also from Phil 1.7 and 4.8. In the wider context Schnackenburg points to the „griechische Tugendlehre“ in Epictetus, *Diss* I, 22.1.⁶² To this one can add Hermagoras and Seneca. Seneca frequently discusses ethical issues by means of a division between that which is *right* and that which is *permitted*.⁶³ In view of Paul's knowledge of Aratus and his three year stay in Ephesus, which had one of the major libraries at that time,⁶⁴ it is not inconceivable that Seneca's rhetoric exercised a degree of influence on the wording of Ephesians. In any case, while Seneca distinguishes between "equity", that which is *right*, and "Law", or that which is *permitted*, Ephesians appears to distinguish between what is *right* and what is *lawful*. As is well known, the former component has been taken by Dibelius and Weidinger as evidence for a Stoic origin of the NT household codes. This restriction to an exclusive background of Greek moral argument⁶⁵ neglects Jewish-hellenistic sources such as *Ant* I, 158; VI, 165 and VIII, 208 where Josephus links the term with obedience to God's laws (cf Eph 6.1f!). For Josephus "the righteous man"⁶⁶ is he who obeys God's commandments. The terms δίκαιος and νόμος belong together (*Con Ap* II, 293; *Ant* VI, 165 and VIII, 208). Both texts agree with Ephesians further in that obedience to God's laws is related to the promises of reward. This raises the question whether Ephesians may have combined, rather than distinguished, the concepts of what is *right* and what is *demanded by the Law*. In other words, it may be best to read τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶν δίκαιον as an introduction to the quotation, rather than as a separate reason given for the injunction to honour one's parents. Only four verses earlier the author also introduced a Pentateuchal quotation indirectly by means of a γὰρ-connection.

Can the tendency to link δίκαιος with νόμος, seen in Ephesians and Josephus, be traced back to the OT itself? It may not be

⁶² Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 267.

⁶³ Kennedy, *Rhetoric*, 325f.

⁶⁴ Cf Tarn, *Civilisation*, 270.

⁶⁵ Dibelius, *Epheser*, 95.

⁶⁶ Josephus repeatedly describes the Jewish 'righteous man' and even God as δίκαιος (*Ant* 2.10.8; 9.33; 10.38; 11.55 and 14.172 as well as *Bell* 7.323). Philo employs the term for God even more often (Schrenk, δίκαιος, 186).

sufficient to point to occurrences of the combination of δίκαιος + νόμος alone, as such a combination in itself is hardly surprising.⁶⁷ However, the following texts are noteworthy. Ps 36.28-31,34 equates *obedience to the Law* and *doing what is right*. Significantly the Psalmist framed this pairing with the promise of the inheritance of the land/earth for ever (cf Exod 20.12 and Eph 6.3). Prov 28.1-12 likewise identifies the deeds of the righteous man with obedience to God's Law. In the centre of this section the poet suddenly turns to the idea of the son who dishonours his father (again cf Exod 20.12 and Eph 6.1-3). While it is unlikely that the author of Ephesians had these passages in mind, they are nevertheless close conceptual parallels which show that the author, like Josephus, is at home in the thought world of the OT. It can therefore be assumed with confidence that the phrase τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν δίκαιον does not form a separate basis for the admonition to honour one's parents, but rather it pre-empts and introduces the quotation of the fifth commandment. We could paraphrase as follows: it is right to honour one's parents because this is already stated in the Law. Again we encounter the phenomenon of safeguarding the ethical continuity between the covenant of the old people of God and the new Christian sect (cf especially ch 4.25ff⁶⁸). This would have struck a chord especially with Diaspora Judaism which, as Hengel has put it,⁶⁹ "never grew weary of stressing the universal validity of the Law of Moses in an ethical interpretation." Eph 2.13-17 is different: here the writer is not concerned with the universal validity of the Law,⁷⁰ but to show the ethical compatibility of the Christian faith with Judaism, thus removing the charge of ethical libertinism (cf 1 Cor 9.19-23). In this way the *Haustafel* counterbalances the harsh statements of ch 2.11ff which may otherwise have caused Jewish "guardians of the tradition" (Sir 1.15) among the readers to accuse the writer of literally endorsing lawlessness.

When the phrase τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν δίκαιον is linked with the quotation rather than understood as a separate reason for obedience—one from general morality, the other from the Law—it then remains to establish how the interjection ἥτις ἐντολή πρώτη

⁶⁷ Cf in the LXX eg Deut 4.8; Ps 118.136f; Prov 9.9f; 3 Macc 3.4f; 4 Macc 2.23; 13.23 and 15.9f.

⁶⁸ See my discussion above.

⁶⁹ Hengel, *Judaism*, 174f.

⁷⁰ He made it quite plain that the Law had been removed by the cross. The author would have found it especially difficult to agree with Eccles 3.3 which promises atonement of sins as a reward for honouring one's parents (cf Eph 2.8-10).

ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ should be read. There are in principle four different interpretative options. (1) In the temporal interpretation, the fifth commandment could be regarded as the first to be learned by children.⁷¹ The difficulty with this view is that it cannot be proven historically. Also, would the author have stimulated young children to honour their parents by promising them a long life? Would living a long life have been a major concern for children of a young age? Indirect support for Stier's view may be derived from 1 QSa 1.7⁷² which confirms that it was customary to teach a youngster 'the laws of the covenant according to his age'. (2) Others seize on the lack of the definite article in the Greek text and go on to translate "commandment of foremost significance", rather than "the most important commandment".⁷³ But Hendricksen and Foulkes⁷⁴ fail to note that numbers do not require the definite article.⁷⁵ A clear example of this is Mark 12.28f where the expression ἐντολὴ πρώτη denotes the most important commandment. In the present case this could be supported by the importance attributed to the fifth commandment within Israel's Scriptures, particularly in Lev 19.1ff. The phrase could therefore mean "the first commandment in rank".⁷⁶ (3) Westcott and Hort proposed to insert a comma after πρώτος, thus linking ἐπαγγελίᾳ to ἵνα. But Westcott comments himself that no explanation "seems wholly satisfactory".⁷⁷ The most popular option among commentators is the numerical one.⁷⁸ (4) Given that the second commandment in the decalogue does not strictly speaking include a promise—it simply states a characteristic of Yahweh—the fifth commandment can be said to be numerically the first command with a promise attached. Given also that this is the only commandment within the decalogue to have a promise attached,

⁷¹ Stier is followed by Wood, *Ephesians*, 81 and reluctantly by Abbott, *Ephesians*, 177.

⁷² This is the *Rule of the Congregation* which, of course, cannot have been known to Stier.

⁷³ Hendricksen, *Ephesians*, 260.

⁷⁴ Foulkes, *Ephesians*, 164.

⁷⁵ Kühner-Gerth, *Grammatik* I, 639.

⁷⁶ Schlier, *Epheser*, 1281 n3; Gnlika, *Epheser*, 296 and Stoeckhardt, *Ephesians*, 250.

⁷⁷ Westcott, *Ephesians*, 88, followed by Wood, *Ephesians*, 81.

⁷⁸ Caird, *Ephesians*, 90; Mitton, *Ephesians*, 242; Dibelius-Greeven, *Epheser*, 95; Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 267; Mussner, *Epheser*, 162 and Lincoln, "Use" 38 and *Ephesians*, 404.

πρώτη must mean "the first in the Pentateuch", rather than "the first in the decalogue".⁷⁹

The first and third options outlined can safely be ignored. Of the second and fourth options the latter is preferable. However, the fifth commandment played a major role in the Torah and so it may be a false alternative to regard these two as mutually exclusive. In fact, the whole point of stressing the numerical position of the fifth commandment among all those with promises attached would precisely have been to draw out its significance. This practice is well known from rabbinic sources.⁸⁰ We can safely conclude that the author's concern was to emphasise the significance of the fifth commandment within the written Torah as a whole. This is consistent with the place of the commandment in Israel's Scriptures.

The Pedagogical Function of the Promise

In an epistle which emphasises both the spiritual dimension of the Christian inheritance (ch 1.14; 2.12; 3.6) as well as God's grace over against human achievements (2.8-10) it seems somewhat bewildering to find an appropriation of an OT promise of well-being and a long life on earth as a reward for honouring one's parents. On the face of it this appears to go some way in the direction of Ecclus 3.3 which claims that to honour one's parents amounts to making atonement for sins. Consequently commentators have attempted to detect a spiritualisation of the original promise by the author of Ephesians.⁸¹ But evidence of such spiritualisation is neither detectable in ch 5.31f nor in ch 6.2f. Indeed, the author took care to omit in the quotation the reference to the fact that the land is given "to you by the Lord your God" (LXX Exod 20.12). In so doing the scope of the promise, which originally referred to the land of Canaan, is widened.

The promise has been taken by scholars as a pointer to the post-Pauline stance of the author. Thus Lincoln points to 1 Tim 4.8, which regards godliness as "of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life as well as for the life to come".⁸² While it might be objected that Rom 2.6f shows that Paul would probably not have disagreed with this statement in principle, this text differs from Eph 6

⁷⁹ For this reason and because the Jews divided the decalogue into two parts of equal length—two tables featuring five commandments each—the suggestion that the fifth commandment should be seen as numerically the first commandment of the second table becomes not only unnecessary, but also wrong.

⁸⁰ Cf SB, 900-8.

⁸¹ Schlier, *Epheser*, 282; Barth, *Ephesians*, 756 and Ernst, *Epheser*, 393.

⁸² Lincoln, "Use", 39.

in that it does not promise benefits for the present life. There are other texts such as 1 Cor 3.12-15 and 2 Cor 5.10 which stress that 'works' will be taken into account at the final reckoning. But again there is no emphasis on rewards in this present life. Does the quotation of the original promise of long life in Eph 6 therefore differ from Paul's thinking? As the author does not elaborate on the promise at all, this is hard to assess. The author's lack of interaction with the quoted promise which contrasts with the quotation and interpretation of a Pentateuchal text only five verses earlier, may support Gnllka's and Schnackenburg's view that the promise was only quoted to underscore the significance of the commandment.⁸³ Indeed, the interruption of the quotation created by the phrase ἥτις ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ may suggest that the author had not initially intended to quote both commandment and promise. The promise may well have been added to illustrate the correctness of the preceding phrase, just as the quoted commandment (v2) was added to underpin the phrase τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶν δίκαιον. Having mentioned the promise, the author felt compelled to supply the actual wording of the promise. The logical priorities of the sentence units could be illustrated as follows.

- A Τὰ τέκνα ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσιν ὑμῶν [ἐν κυρίῳ]
- B τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶν δίκαιον
- C *commandment quoted*
- B' ἐστὶν ἐντολὴ πρώτη ἐν ἐπαγγελίᾳ
- C' *promise quoted*
- A' Καὶ οἱ πατέρες μὴ παροργίζετε τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν ...

In both instances (C and C') the quotation supports the premise (B and B'). In view of this supporting role of the quotations, we should refrain from spiritualising the promise. Also, the author is not endorsing the fifth commandment as having ongoing literal validity by virtue of its Pentateuchal origin (cf ch 2.13ff).⁸⁴ It might be objected that the original wording of the promise (LXX Exod 20.12) has been changed in Eph 6 by the introduction of the unusual future middle ἔσῃ—which is dependent on ἵνα (cf Gal 2.4)—to replace γένη, thus highlighting the future aspect of the promise. But this

⁸³ Gnllka, *Epheser*, 279 and Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 268.

⁸⁴ If a re-application of the promise had been intended we might have expected plural pronouns in the quotation. We have repeatedly seen that the author had no hesitation in adapting the wording of the quoted text.

ignores the fact that no aorist subjunctive of the verb was available.⁸⁵ Hence the writer may have preferred to preserve the difference in mood between the verbs of the original text.⁸⁶ There is no compelling reason to suspect a deliberate re-application of the quoted promise to the writer's audience. At this point it is instructive to turn to the Colossian *Vorlage* (3.21) which runs as follows:

Τὰ τέκνα ὑπακούετε τοῖς γονεῦσιν κατὰ πάντα τοῦτο γὰρ
εὐάρεστόν ἐστιν ἐν κυρίῳ Οἱ πατέρες μὴ ἔρεθίζετε τὰ τέκνα
ὑμῶν.

The comparison shows the following: (1) Ephesians shifted the reference to the "Lord" away from the causal clause and included it instead in the main exhortation [line A]. (2) The resulting phrase τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστιν δίκαιον (Eph 6.1) looks rather insipid by comparison. Both phenomena can be explained by viewing the quotation [C] as a deliberate reiteration of this phrase. To paraphrase, honouring one's parents is not only right [B] in the Lord [A], it was already seen to be right in the Jewish Law [C].⁸⁷ This stress on ethical continuity with the Jewish mother religion is not detectable in Colossians. Whereas Scriptural teaching on morality may not have mattered crucially to the Colossians, the situation was apparently different with Ephesians.⁸⁸

Conclusion

The claim that the presence of OT material in the text of Ephesians is irrelevant can now be safely discarded.⁸⁹ On the contrary, the OT text was important enough for the author of Ephesians to re-arrange the Colossian *Vorlage* in order to accommodate the fifth commandment. Having said that, the text of the commandment is not re-applied as commandment, rather it serves to underscore the importance of honouring one's parents and, perhaps even more importantly, to

⁸⁵ Abbott, *Ephesians*, 177. For an aorist subjunctive dependent on ἵνα see 1 Cor 9.18.

⁸⁶ Westcott, *Ephesians*, 88.

⁸⁷ Bruce, *Ephesians*, 398 comes to a similar conclusion, without, however, giving precise reasons.

⁸⁸ The relationship between Ephesians and Colossians falls outside the scope of this investigation. What is clear, however, is that any discussion of this matter would have to take the striking difference in the use/neglect of the OT in Ephesians and Colossians into account.

⁸⁹ This claim is made by Lindemann, *Zeit*, 88. To recognise quite rightly that the use of the OT does at this point not involve a „Weissagungsbeweis“ (p89) is not the same as to show that the OT quotation is irrelevant.

illustrate the author's essential agreement in matters of ethics with the God revealed the Jewish Scriptures. The possibility that the author also wished to counter tendencies in libertine Christian circles to devalue the thrust of the fifth commandment cannot be proven, but remains a distinct possibility.

CHAPTER NINE

EPH 6.10,14-17 AND THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power... Stand firm, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breast plate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

No-one questions that various texts from Isaiah have heavily influenced Eph 6.14-17. What is debated is the nature and precise extent of this influence and whether an appreciation of this OT background has a bearing on the interpretation of these verses. Kamlah, for instance, is rather pessimistic and holds that the OT sources behind Eph 6.14ff are not enough to explain the passage satisfactorily.¹ This may or may not prove to be so. What can be shown is that an increased awareness of the OT background is rewarding.

Commentators on the theology of this epistle have regrettably frequently passed over this passage frequently, as Arnold rightly complains.² This may be attributed partly to a lack of certainty among scholars, as to the epistolary interpretative framework of ch 6.10-20. It is not entirely clear whether these verses are meant to conclude just the ethical section of the epistle (chs 4 - 6), or the entire letter including the doxological first half. This question is linked closely with another: does the armour imagery expounded here allude to the full gear of a Roman soldier, as has traditionally been thought, or are there other interpretations which may be used to supplement the traditional explanation of the imagery employed? It is partly the aim of this chapter to propose such a supplementary understanding and show how it relates to the OT language characterising this passage.

¹ In Wild, "Warrior", 286.

² Arnold, *Powers*, 226 and 227 n6.

It is not only the co-textual framework of these verses which is somewhat difficult to determine, the historical context which occasioned this concluding imagery is equally hard to establish. Attempts to relate the epistle as a whole to a specific historical situation have been somewhat lacking in recent decades—the exception is Arnold's study—and even less efforts have been made to find a suitable *Sitz* for this passage in particular. Rather than attempting to reconstruct a setting for the epistle from ch 6.10ff, scholars on the whole approach this concluding section in the light of historical assumptions based on other portions—usually ch 2.11ff—of this document. Thus Käsemann conjectured that the growing gentile Christianity pushed aside and despised Jewish Christianity.³ Along somewhat similar lines Schmithals argues that the author had attempted to bring together those Christian communities which broke away from the diaspora synagogues in the wake of the destruction of the Temple.⁴ Schnackenburg and Merklein claim that the cause of disunity was a post-apostolic leadership crisis.⁵ Pokorny suggests that the main reason for the disunity among the addressees consisted of differences in the evaluation of gnostic concepts by Jewish and gentile members among the congregations.⁶ Each of these proposals can be related only vaguely, if at all, to ch 6.10ff.

More relevant to interpreting this text is Lona's proposal to explain the letter on the basis of a fundamental *Weltangst* found in the social environment into which the letter was directed.⁷ This acknowledges that our text presupposes a situation of conflict which may well have gone beyond the confines of the Christian sect.⁸ The assumption that the armoury passage should be treated as a plain encouragement to take the spiritual battle to the forces of evil may well prove to be in need of some modification. New avenues will have to be explored, and I propose to re-examine the use of traditional language in this text.

It will be necessary, first, to become acquainted with the role of this section within the epistle and, secondly, to ascertain the internal coherence of this text. This will be followed by locating and

³ Käsemann, "Ephesians and Acts", 291.

⁴ Schmithals, *Corpus*, 122.

⁵ Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 31 and Merklein, *Kirche*, 386ff.

⁶ Pokorny, *Epheser*.

⁷ Lona, *Eschatologie*, 439.

⁸ Such *Weltangst* lies at the heart of much of the astrological and magical activities which characterised first century Western Asia Minor (Seiterle, "Artemis", 3-16; Arnold, *Powers*, 471-4).

highlighting the underlying traditions. Finally these traditions will be related to a fresh interpretation of this prominent section, prominent not only within the epistle, but throughout Christian preaching and worship. Such preaching has perhaps too often drawn on this text in a stereotyped manner by focusing too exclusively on the 'Roman soldier' background of the imagery. As a result, the panoply passage has occasionally been used to support the relatively widespread view that the Christian struggle against evil has to be conducted offensively. This may at times have prevented an application of the text more faithful to the author's intention. These and other questions will be pursued under the following headings:

The Place of Chapter 6.10-20 within the Epistle

The Structural Thrust of Chapter 6.10-17

On Locating Traditions

 Parenetic Patterns and the *Sitz im Leben* of Ephesians 6.10ff

 Qumran Parallels

 The Old Testament Traditions Employed

 Isaiah 11.4f and Ephesians 6.14(17?)

 Isaiah 59.17 and Ephesians 6.14,17

 Isaiah 52.7 and Ephesians 6.15

 Conclusion

The Struggle against the Powers

 Present versus Future - The Temporal Setting of the Struggle

 A Possibility of Losing the Struggle?

 Offensive and Defensive Aspects of the Struggle?

 The Quality of the Panoply Offered - Virtues or Gifts?

 "Truth Buckled around your Waist"

 "Clothed with the Breast Plate of Righteousness"

 "The Firmness of the Gospel of Peace"

 "The Shield of Faith"

 "The Helmet of Salvation"

 "The Sword of the Spirit"

 Conclusion

Metaphor and Audience - Some Concluding Hermeneutical Observations

 The Metaphorical Referent of the Panoply

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THE PLACE OF CH 6.10-20 WITHIN THE EPISTLE

As expected, this concluding section serves to reiterate some of the major themes of the epistle. Text-critically the introductory phrase τοῦ λοιποῦ may be slightly uncertain.⁹ It is equally debated whether the phrase is a 'genitive of completion' or whether it should be understood temporally. Whichever is correct,¹⁰ the author is here thinking of the historical situation of his audience, rather than being driven by purely formal considerations. This passage may well prove valuable for illuminating the social background of the intended target congregation(s).

There is a basic debate as to whether this portion of the letter reiterates mainly chs 4 - 6,¹¹ or indeed the entire epistle.¹² The former view could be based on Wild's observation that the five imperatives found in this concluding section reiterate the thirty-one imperatives of the chs 4.1 - 6.9. However, arguments of content should take priority over stylistic considerations. A comparison of this passage with the entire document reveals that it concludes not just the second half of the epistle but all six chapters. This has not been sufficiently acknowledged by commentators, yet it is relatively easy to demonstrate by tracing the main terms employed in vv10-20. This is best illustrated by the following table which charts the spread of such terms throughout the epistle. It emerges that our passage reflects much of the earlier terminology used and that there is a reasonably even spread of such terms throughout the whole of the letter.

⁹ p⁴⁶, Sinaiticus, A, B and the miniscules including 1739 favour τοῦ λοιποῦ ("as from now on"). The alternative τὸ λοιπὸν ("as for the rest") is supported by Ξ, D, F, G and 044. These mss reflect a later date than those supporting τοῦ λοιποῦ. The credibility of Claramontanus is in some jeopardy owing to its frequent deviations from generally accepted readings (Aland, *Text*, 283). Moreover, τοῦ λοιποῦ appears to be the *lectio difficilior*, whereas τὸ λοιπὸν could on the basis of its use in 1 Cor 7.29; Phil 3.1; 4.8; 1 Thes 4.1 and 2 Thes 3.1 be explained as a v.l. In view of these observations τοῦ λοιποῦ should be retained.

¹⁰ Gnllka, *Epheser*, 304 n1 protests with reference to BDF that τοῦ λοιποῦ understood temporally would require the term χρόνου. BDF, *Grammar*, 186.2 disagree and point out that Gal 6.17—the only other NT occurrence of the genitive form—uses τοῦ λοιποῦ temporally without appending χρόνου. This is not entirely compelling, but one might argue that the NT consistently employs the accusative τὸ λοιπὸν to express the concept "as for the rest". Neither argument is decisive. On balance, I am inclined to go along with Gnllka's interpretation.

¹¹ Wild, "Warrior", 288 (cf n12); Masson, *Epître*, 223 regards vv10-20 as the conclusion for ch 4.17 - 6.9.

¹² Mitton, *Ephesians*, 218; Sampley, *Flesh*, 9; Arnold, *Powers*, 284 calls it the letter's zenith in terms of the power terminology employed.

	ch 1	ch 2	ch 3	ch 4	ch 5	ch 6	vv10ff
<i>mighty strength</i>	x		x				x
<i>evil scheming</i>				x			x
<i>the powers</i>	x	x	x				x
<i>evil day(s)</i>					x		x
<i>truth</i>	x			x	x		x
<i>righteousness</i>				x	x		x
<i>peace</i>	x	x		x			x
<i>faith</i>	x	x	x	x		x	x
<i>devil</i>				x			x
<i>salvation</i>	x						x
<i>Spirit</i>	x		x	x	x		x

Many of the terms which re-appear in the concluding section could be termed 'flashbacks'. Their re-currence has the purpose of recalling earlier passages. A number of indicators support this assumption. There is, for instance, a curious cluster of terms (ἀλήθεια, δικαιοσύνη, and πίστις) which appears repeatedly.¹³ The most striking of these clusters connects ch 6.14-17 with ch 1.13. These verses have no less than five terms or concepts in common (ἀλήθεια, ῥῆμα/λόγος, σωτηρία, πίστις and πνεῦμα). Clearly, therefore, ch 6.10ff should be interpreted with the entire epistle in view. The major importance attached to these terms by the author cannot be doubted. Consequently, their deliberate use in conjunction with the OT weapon imagery needs to be examined carefully. The author spared no effort to employ terms already familiar to the readers from Israel's Scriptures. It is hardly likely that he did so

¹³ Cf ἀλήθεια-δικαιοσύνη 4.24; 5.9 and 6.14; ἀλήθεια-πίστις 1.13. All three terms are linked in ch 6.14,16.

purely for formal or rhetorical reasons.¹⁴ With this in mind we proceed by focusing on the place of vv10-17 within the discourse.

THE STRUCTURAL THRUST OF CH 6.10-17

Despite Aland's arrangement of these verses, vv10-13 and 14-17 form two self-contained units. The former is a ring composition¹⁵ which is free of traditional elements, the latter consists almost entirely of material taken either from Isaiah or from the preceding chapters. Vv10-13 provide us with the clearest indication of the author's purpose. V12 is flanked by two almost identical doublets which urge putting on the panoply and withstanding evil (vv11,13). The core verse (v12) highlights the main issue, whereas the three infinitives of *σῆναι* reiterate the purpose of the panoply as well as the nature of the struggle at hand. Both are defensive. The beginning of the second unit (vv14-17) again takes up *σῆναι*, thus indicating that the previous verses form the parameters for the interpretation of the panoply.¹⁶

All this is particularly noteworthy in view of the common tendency by commentators to interpret the struggle (*πάλη*) in parallel to the offensive Roman army in action. One wonders whether this is in some tension with the author's defensive emphasis to the point of clumsy repetition (threefold *σῆναι*), and also with the fact that *πάλη* is mostly used of wrestling matches.¹⁷ Further evidence will emerge which suggests that the traditional understanding of the Christian struggle in these verses on the basis of the Roman army in action¹⁸ probably ought to be somewhat

¹⁴ To be sure, some of these terms have already been framed by or phrased in deliberate OT language—cf the *powers* in ch 1.21 and *peace* 2.13-17.

¹⁵ See Wild, "Warrior", 286.

¹⁶ For the use of infinitives with the force of imperatives see Daube's appendix to Selwyn's *First Peter*, 467f. Evidence from the Greek papyri has been discussed by Meecham, "Participles", 207f.

¹⁷ 2 Macc 4.14 speaks of the "wrestling arena" or *παλαίστρα*, cf Levine, "Legacy", 560-3. The term *πάλη*, which is far more unusual than *πόλεμος* (war), can almost be thought of as a technical term. Philo can use it for the struggle of asceticism (*Mut Nom*, 14 and *Leg All* 190) precisely because it required stamina, i.e. the ability to *withstand*—cf *σῆναι* in Eph 6.10-14. For a study of "Belt-Wrestling in the Bible World" see the article under the same title by Gordon, 131-40. Also Pfitzner, *Paul*, 159. The argument that *πάλη* can also be used of military struggles (Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 444) and that it should be understood primarily in this way here seems not to take into account fully the fact of its combination in Eph 6 with the threefold use of *σῆναι*.

¹⁸ Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 278 and Carr, *Angels*, 197.

qualified. It may be useful to take account of the OT background of the panoply metaphor, and to combine this with what can be inferred about the religio-cultural setting of the addressees and their environment.¹⁹ For the moment it suffices to note that the internal logical relationship between the first (vv10-13) and the second unit (vv14-17) of our passage is that of aims and means. The latter cannot be interpreted correctly without giving due regard to the former. While the OT imagery is confined to those verses which state the means, their interpretation in the Ephesian context must nevertheless not lose sight of the stated aims of the struggle described. Before studying the panoply in more detail, the precise location and nature of the underlying traditions must be examined.

ON LOCATING TRADITIONS

Discussion of the traditions underlying Eph 6.10ff must take account of the following areas. (1) On a general level, it has to be ascertained whether the panoply imagery goes back to early Christian or even to Jewish parenetical traditions. (2) More specifically, there is the question of the possible contribution of the Qumran documents to our understanding of this text. (3) Finally, and most importantly, the precise location and thrust of those OT phrases which can be traced with certainty need to be uncovered.

Early Christian or Jewish Parenetic Patterns and the Sitz im Leben of Eph 6.10-17

Approximately half a century ago Carrington pointed out in an influential study that Ephesians, Colossians, 1 Peter and James reflect a common stock of catechetical material.²⁰ He deduced that these writings drew on a storehouse of probably oral hortatory

¹⁹ Robinson, *Ephesians*, 133 and Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 436 are also slightly skeptical of whether the 'Roman soldier' derivation of the imagery employed suffices to explain the conceptual background of our text. The classic texts supplying us with information about the outfit of Roman soldiers are Josephus, *Bell*, 3.93ff and Polybius, 6.23. A comparison between these descriptions and Eph 6 reveals that numerous offensive weapons—long sword, javelin and lances or spears—as well the typical caliga are missing in the latter. Also, the helmet referred to in Ephesians, περικεφαλαιόν, is different from that mentioned in the Roman sources, i.e. κράνος. The reference to *peace* in Eph 6.15 is also not easy to reconcile with the Roman army imagery. This leaves the possibility of an OT derivation of the weapons mentioned.

²⁰ Carrington, *Catechism*.

patterns.²¹ These patterns consisted not only of the key terms listed, but also of markers such as the use of participles as imperatives, a feature most evident in the NT household codes and similar rules. With respect to Eph 6.10ff, Arnold observed that Ephesians expanded the conventional pattern by making reference to the devil, the evil powers, the warfare concept,²² the need for the power of God, and the weaponry metaphors.²³ Arnold is justified when he criticises Fischer for the generalisation that our text represents a typical „Neophytenparänese“.²⁴ The emphasis on the struggle and weaponry concepts needs to be taken seriously. Why is the author the only NT writer to place such a strong emphasis on this concept? Is it that Eph 6.10ff is more closely related to the 'Ephesian' situation than is generally acknowledged? Arnold's reconstruction is as follows:

Many converts were streaming into the churches. These had formerly been affiliated with the Artemis cult, practised magic, consulted astrologers, and participated in various mysteries. Underlying the former beliefs and manner of life of all these converts was a common and deepset fear of demonic "powers"...The author gives them instructions based on OT teaching (Isaiah) in light of the work of Christ who provides the church with access to the power of God.²⁵

This reconstruction of the addressees' situation rightly draws attention to the OT material employed. What has yet to be established is the precise nature and degree to which this reconstructed background and the thrust of the OT texts alluded to go hand in hand. Arnold went beyond the cautious remarks of most commentators. There is no reason why Arnold's efforts cannot be advanced by a close examination of the impact the material from Isaiah had on the re-shaping of the hortatory patterns isolated by Carrington. It is far from inconceivable in the light of the widespread practice of Jewish magic and mysticism in Western Asia Minor²⁶ that

²¹ Among the key elements listed by Carrington are the expressions *put off* (Col 3.8f; Eph 4.25ff; 1 Pet 2.1 and Jam 1.21); *new creation* (Col 3.9-15; Eph 4.22-4; 1 Pet 2.22f; Jam 1.18); *watch and pray* (Col 4.2-6; Eph 6.18; 1 Pet 4.7); and *stand and resist* (Col 4.12; Eph 6.10-7; 1 Pet 5.8-12; Jam 4.7b), cf Davies, *Paul*, 123-8. The possible, but by no means certain, association of these terms with early Christian baptism need not detain us here as Ephesians places no emphasis whatsoever on baptism.

²² We saw above that it may well be safer to speak of a *struggle*, rather than *warfare*.

²³ Arnold, *Powers*, 231.

²⁴ Fischer, *Tendenz*, 172.

²⁵ Arnold, *Powers*, 285ff.

²⁶ *Ibid*, 68ff.

the author's repetitive use of OT traditions, at crucial locations within the epistle, reflects his attempt to speak directly to precisely such a situation. It is surely not coincidental that the main difference between the hortatory patterns isolated by Carrington in Ephesians and Colossians consists of the addition of OT material to the former. This would cohere with the repeatedly stated possibility, or indeed likelihood, that in contrast to Colossians, Ephesians envisages a congregation with at least some Jewish-minded members.²⁷ The other vital conclusion to be drawn is that Ephesians uniquely enriched the parenetic patterns uncovered by Carrington—especially the *stand fast* and *resist* motif—not only by creatively interweaving concepts lacking in parallel NT passages (Arnold), but by additionally combining them with the OT panoply imagery. It remains to uncover the likely origin of the struggle concept.

Qumran Parallels

Discussions of the closest literary parallels to the Ephesian struggle motif generally focus on a variety of Qumran texts which mention the holy war.²⁸ These texts primarily reflect the idea of an eschatological fight in which "God's help and man's action go together".²⁹ Various scholars hold these parallels to be vital for the illumination of Eph 6.10-17.³⁰ Both documents show evidence of material drawn from Isaiah.³¹ However, it proves impossible to demonstrate any common peculiarities in the appropriation of these traditions. It is probably overly optimistic to speak of a direct relationship between the two bodies of thought and literature. Despite Kuhn's claim that our passage should be read against the background of 1QS,³² the actual points of contact between Qumran and Ephesians which do not overlap with Isaiah are minimal.³³

²⁷ The possibility that the author thinks of gentiles who have become acquainted with the Jewish Scriptures through attending synagogues is of course real, but one would have expected more explicit references to the OT, that is specific introductory formulae which make the OT provenance of the material evident.

²⁸ Notably 1QM; CD 19.7; and 1QSb 5.24b. Cf also Hengel, *Zealots*, 277-312.

²⁹ Braun, *Qumran* II, 269.

³⁰ For an extensive list see Braun, *Qumran* I, 222.

³¹ It has been observed occasionally that Qumran and early Christianity often drew on the same OT material, notably from Deuteronomy, the Psalms and Isaiah.

³² Kuhn, "πανοπλία", 298-300.

³³ The only exception to this is the evidence of dualism found both in 1QS and in Ephesians, but not in Isaiah. This is outweighed by the differences between Qumran and Ephesians. The former knows of no spiritual weaponry. Between the weapons mentioned in both writings there is only a minimal overlap consisting of references to the shield (cf 1QM 5.1). For Qumran the end-time fight is far from

In our search for the origin of the struggle motif we will have to turn our attention first to the OT source employed (Isaiah)³⁴ and secondly to the likely situation and environment of the letter's intended audience.

The OT Traditions Employed

Most commentators acknowledge at least three links between our present passage and Isaiah (chs 11.5; 52.7; 59.17). What is a matter of dispute is whether the author of Ephesians obtained the material for these verses via a third party—for example Wisdom or Qumran literature—or drew on Isaiah independently. In view of the use of the Jewish Scriptures elsewhere in the epistle the possibility of direct access cannot be ruled out. At the same time this does not by definition exclude the possibility of mediation. Certainty is impossible as is so often the case with decisions of this kind. Each instance must be judged on its own merit.

Eph 6.14(17?) - Isa 11.4f

Compared with ch 6.10, v14 betrays much more clearly its indebtedness to Isaiah. This is acknowledged by most.³⁵ The extent of verbal agreement leaves no room for any other conclusion:

being purely spiritual. It clearly involves physical bloodshed. To be sure, the covenanters are reported to have written spiritual slogans onto their weaponry; however, this was with a view to making their own weapons God's weapons (Fischer, *Tendenz*, 168). Moreover, while the covenanters expected to take part actively in the struggle to come, such an emphasis is lacking entirely from Ephesians. Instead we find a major stress on the defensive role to be played by believers; it is God—as indeed the weapons are God's—who fights the evil powers. Consequently Ephesians lacks any mention of personal hatred for the enemy. Finally, whereas in Qumran the fight is envisaged strictly for the future, Ephesians is equally concerned, if not more, with the present. It may be added that apart from the Qumran literature the concept of the apocalyptic warfare is also found in Test Abr 7.3; Dan 10.13,20; Rev 9.11 and 19.11ff. The aforementioned differences between Qumran and Ephesians apply largely to these pieces of literature as well.

³⁴ Even in Dan 7, which is not specifically alluded to in the verses under discussion, close conceptual parallels to Ephesians are noticeable. Thus God acts sovereignly, with the believers playing no active part at all. The Ephesian picture of the armoured believer withstanding evil forces on the evil day would make a fitting counter piece to the pictorial depiction in Dan 7 of the four beasts attacking God's people. While these points of contact are by no means overwhelming, Caragounis has clearly shown that the author was well aware of Dan 2 and 7 (*Mysterion*, 121-6). Dan 7 is in any case at least as likely a source of influence on Eph 6.10ff as the traditions preserved in the Qumran documents and elaborated by Kuhn and Mussner.

³⁵ Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 284; Levine, "Legacy", 562 and Dibelius-Greeven, *Epheser*, 99 to name but a few scholars.

Isa 11.5 Καὶ ἔσται δικαιοσύνη ἐζώμενος τὴν ὁσφὺν αὐτοῦ,
καὶ ἀληθεὶα εἰλημένος τὰς πλευράς

Eph 6.14 στήτε οὖν περιζωσάμενοι τὴν ὁσφὺν ὑμῶν ἐν ἀληθείᾳ
καὶ ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸν θώρακα τῆς δικαιοσύνης

The conceptual parallels include especially the juxtaposition of truth and righteousness (cf Eph 4.24; 5.9 and 6.14).³⁶ Isa 11.4 states that God will smite the earth with *the word of his mouth and with the breath of [his] lips*.³⁷ The accumulation of references to Isaiah throughout this passage, and the entire epistle, clearly favours the deliberate use of 11.5 in v14. This is confirmed by the weaving together of individual verses from different parts of Isaiah.³⁸ What, then, aroused the NT author's interest in these verses?

In his attempt to explain the whole of Isaiah as a carefully constructed drama, Watts plausibly proposes an "arch structure" for

³⁶ MT emphasises this by means of the double occurrence of the phrase "will be his belt". LXX uses different terms, but retains the parallelism. To some extent Eph 4.24; 5.9 and 6.14 are all reminiscent of Isa 11. Possibly the plethora of expression in Eph 1.17—"...πνεῦμα σοφίας καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως ἐν ἐπιγνώσει αὐτοῦ"—can be traced back to Isa 11.2: πνεῦμα σοφίας καὶ συνέσεως, πνεῦμα βουλήs καὶ ἰσχύος, πνεῦμα γνώσεως. But this remains uncertain.

³⁷ Interestingly the Hebrew text has *sceptre* or *rod* (טַבַּעַב) instead of word. Isa 49.2 states that God made "my mouth like a sharp sword". There are numerous instances in the OT where *mouth* and *sword* are associated (Ps 55.22; 57.5; 59.8; Prov 12.18; 25.18; 30.14; Heb 4.12; cf Rev 1.16; 2.12,16; 19.15). Since the use of *sword* for *word of God* and *mouth of God* is widespread and traditional—Schlier, *Epheser*, 298 lists also Isa 49.2 Hos 6.5; Wis 18.15; Philo, *Cher*, 28; *Quis Div Her*, 130 and *Leg Alleg* III, 26 *et al*—while, apart from Isa 11, the term *rod* is not associated with *mouth*, the author of Ephesians may well have subconsciously linked Isa 11.4 with ch 49.2. Incidentally, the synonymous parallelism in the second half of Isa 11.4 correlates the terms *word/rod* and *breath* (πνεῦμα). If indeed the traditional association of *sword* and *word/mouth of God* caused the substitution of *sword of his mouth* for *word/rod of his mouth* in Eph 6, the correlation of *sword* and *Spirit* (πνεῦμα) in Eph 6.17 could be paralleled in Isa 11.4. A further reason for the subconscious substitution of *sword* for *word/rod* could be seen in the reference to the belt which could be conceived of as a sword belt (cf Gordon, "Belt-Wrestling", 133 and Levine, "Legacy", 562). This element of the Ephesian panoply, which is otherwise difficult to account for, could thus also be traced to Isa 11.

³⁸ Mitton, *Ephesians*, 224. An example of this is v14, the first part of which recalls Isa 11.5, while the second part echoes Isa 59.17. A second bridge is found in the double (Isa 11.5) and fourfold (Isa 59.17) reference to clothing—cf the occurrence of the helmet in Eph 6.17. This explains the transition from Isa 11 to Isa 59 as well as the reversed order *righteousness* - *truth*. This enabled the stringing together of Isa 11.5 and the leading text (Isa 59.17) at this point.

Isa 10.24 - 12.6, with ch 11.3b-4 as its pinnacle.³⁹ According to this view, Isa 11.1-10 runs as follows: God's messiah will emerge equipped with the Spirit of God and with righteousness and truth in order to establish his kingdom. This is achieved by exercising righteous judgment which will preserve the needy and kill God's enemies. The main criteria will be righteousness and truth. The resulting kingdom will be one of peace and knowledge of God.

This brings us to a comparison of Isa 11.1f with Eph 6.10ff. It is immediately evident that both texts are dominated by talk of God's fight against his enemies who are at the same time the enemies of God's people or remnant. Again both texts feature the so-called paradox of peace, that is the notion that one of the weapons to be employed is peace. Although Isa 11.3ff is to some extent concerned with God's fight against his and his people's enemies, in vv6-8 the focus is rather more on the means of fighting, especially *righteousness* and *truth*. Similarly Eph 6.15 tells its readers to prepare for the struggle against the evil powers by means of the readiness of the gospel of peace. Moreover, in Isaiah's story God's judge prepares for his assignment by means of a spiritual panoply consisting of what could be called 'fruits of the Spirit' (v2). This is supplemented by righteousness and truth.⁴⁰ In view of the prominence of these concepts in Ephesians⁴¹ the suspicion is raised that the gospel of peace (ch 6.15) must be interpreted in relation to them.

Eph 6 and Isa 11 overlap in linking the weaponry with the "Spirit". The messianic expectation of Isa 11 (LXX) includes the conferring of the Spirit of God, the spirit of wisdom, the spirit of

³⁹ Watts, *Isaiah* I, 154 and 169f. His proposed structure is open to criticism in detail, eg the lack of agreement in content and the unequal length of vv3b and 5-8. Nevertheless, the central position of ch 11.3b-4 must be conceded. I would adapt Watts' proposal slightly and include v5 as part of the central unit (vv3b-5). This unit emphasises the interrelationship between peace and righteousness. It is enclosed on either side by a report of God's action against his enemies (10.24ff and 12.11ff), which is bracketed by discussions of the remnant (10.20ff) and its response (the whole of ch 12). This entire passage is flanked by prophecies foretelling the pronouncement of judgment on the enemies (10.5ff and 13.1ff) and their complete destruction. Ch 11.5 forms part of the very centre of chs 10 - 13.

⁴⁰ The belt could refer either to that worn by a high officer (Barth, *Ephesians* II, 767), a sword belt or the ancient wrestling belt (Gordon, "Belt-Wrestling", 133 and Levine, "Legacy", 562). In view of the emphasis on *πάλη*, the latter option appears to be the best. In Isaiah the point is that the physical belt worn by the fighters is replaced by the spiritual belt worn by God's messenger. In this respect Ephesians follows Isaiah.

⁴¹ See my chart above on the occurrence of these terms throughout the epistle.

understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and godliness and the spirit of the fear of God. Eph 6.17 sums up the weaponry by referring to the "sword of the Spirit which is God's word". Contrary to majority opinion, the fact that the Spirit is here seen as part of the Christian's panoply does not imply that attributes of the Isaianic divine messenger have now been transferred to the Christian. Ephesians enumerates the believers' protective gear among which there is God's word. God's word (ῥῆμα - cf 5.26) is not in this instance identical to the gospel (εὐαγγέλιον - cf 1.13; 3.6; 6.15,19) which has already been mentioned in v15.⁴² It can hardly be argued that the epistle's Christian audience was in need of receiving (δέξασθε - v17) the gospel. It is more likely that the phrase refers to the reassurance offered by the Prophet's message which has been summed up in the three preceding verses. More specifically it can be assumed that ῥῆμα θεοῦ refers to the judgment pronounced by God's messenger (Isa 11.4). In this way the indirect link between v17 and Isa 11.4—possibly via ch 49.2—points back to the clear allusion to Isa 11.5 in v14.⁴³

In summary, the implications of the writer's allusions to Isa 11 would have been clear but spiritually challenging to any reader familiar with the OT passage. The message could be paraphrased as follows: *In your struggle against the enemies or powers make use of the well-proven weaponry described by the Prophet. Draw confidence from the fact that the struggle will be decided on God's terms.*

Eph 6.14,17 - Isa 59.17

We saw that the author's indebtedness to Isa 11 found expression in the form of the bracket (vv14,17) which embraces the panoply list proper. This bracket has been reinforced by the author's use of Isa 59.17 in both verses. V14 makes reference to the breastplate of righteousness; v17 takes over the concept of the helmet of salvation.⁴⁴

⁴² Pace Gnllka, *Epheser*, 314; Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 286 and Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 451.

⁴³ For the comparison of the word of God with a sword in order to express its power to judge see also Heb 4.12.

⁴⁴ Arnold's question (*Powers*) whether Ephesians used an LXX version of Isa 59 or the MT cannot be decided for certain. Possibly the use of ἀλήθεια as opposed to πίστις, which is the usual LXX rendering of the Hebrew אֱמֶת (cf MT Isa 11.5) may tip the scale in favour of Isaiah LXX. If the author knew Wis 5, this could be supported further. But inevitably this remains uncertain.

The Ephesian weaponry list is "as remarkable for what it omits as for what it contains."⁴⁵ The second half of Isa 59.17, which mentions the tunic of vengeance and the cloak of fury, is not alluded to. This marks Eph 6 off from Wis 5.17-20 which also depends on Isa 59.17. Ziesler noted the further difference that according to Wis 5 God himself puts on the breastplate.⁴⁶ Also, Wisdom only knows a helmet of fair judgment, not one of salvation.⁴⁷ There are some elements which Wisdom and Ephesians have in common over against Isaiah, notably the term πανοπλία and the order θώρακα + δικαιοσύνη. Wis 5 also features also both a shield and a sword. But in both cases the terms employed, ἄσπις and ῥομφαία, and their referents differ⁴⁸. Dependence of Ephesians on Wisdom may therefore be possible, but is by no means certain.⁴⁹ At the same time it would be premature to deny any direct dependence of Ephesians on Isaiah.⁵⁰ The likeliest scenario is to regard both Ephesians and Wisdom as being directly dependent on Isa 59.⁵¹

What caused the author of Ephesians to take up the panoply motif from Isa 11.4f and 59.17? Part of the answer is the attraction of the phrases quoted. In addition one may point to the similar historical context behind the narratives of both chapters. In ch 11 as well in ch 59 the historical situation described is one of disorder. God's people are partly to blame themselves. Only a remnant will be saved (ch 11.11 and 59.20). In both cases the overarching divine purpose is the establishment of the divine kingdom of peace (cf also Eph 2.13-17). Also, the divine panoply serves to overthrow (Isaiah) or withstand (Ephesians) the evil forces. The weaponry lists are linked by the key term *righteousness*. This reflects the cause of the underlying disorder, that is the lack of righteousness. Surprisingly Isa 59 envisages God himself as the warrior fighting evil, whereas in ch 52 the task is performed by his warrior. The Lord and the messenger are functionally interchangeable. This confirms that the means of

⁴⁵ Caird, *Ephesians*, 93.

⁴⁶ Ziesler, *Righteousness*, 154.

⁴⁷ The term used is κόρυς, not περικεφαλαιόν - cf Isaiah and Ephesians.

⁴⁸ In Wis 5 the referents are holiness and wrath.

⁴⁹ For the view that Wisdom has exercised direct influence on the NT cf Charles, *Pseudepigrapha*, 527. Also Gregg on John's Gospel and Mayor on James.

⁵⁰ Carr, *Angels*, 106. Carr's observation that Ephesians did not take over all expressions used in Isa 59.17 is surely beside the point. Carr seems to rule out partial dependence by definition.

⁵¹ The investigation of Eph 5.14b revealed an indirect link between Ephesians and Isa 60.1f, which is of course very close to ch 59.17. Interestingly, Isa 59.20 forms the background of the quotation in Rom 11.25, while Isa 52.5-7 (cf Isa 52.7 in Eph 2.17 and 6.14,17) influenced Rom 2.24 and 10.15.

judgment employed by the messenger and indeed the items of the weaponry list are primarily understood as divine spiritual gifts to be used under God's guidance (cf 11.3) rather than representing intrinsic values. It does not matter materially whether the narrator depicts the divine servant or God himself as exercising judgment.⁵² It also highlights that the transfer of the weapons to the believers in Ephesians is no more than an extension of Isaiah. The underlying rationale is, first, that Jesus is the Christ and so the fulfillment of the messenger envisaged by the Prophet and, secondly, that Christian believers are members of Christ's body (ἐν Χριστῷ).

Eph 6.15 - Isa 52.7

Readers of Eph 6.15 would no doubt be reminded of the notions of peace being preached to gentiles and peace being preached to Jews in ch 2.17 (cf Isa 52.7). Within the Pauline corpus it is noteworthy that Isa 52.7 also left its mark on Rom 10.15 which quotes the verse in toto. For the sake of convenience all three texts plus Rom 10.15 will be set out for comparison:

Isa 52.7 πάρειμι ὥς ὥρα ἐπὶ τῶν ὁρέων, ὥς πόδες
εὐαγγελιζομένου ἀκοὴν εἰρήνης, ὥς εὐαγγελιζόμενος
ἀγαθὰ

Eph 2.17 καὶ ἔλθων εὐηγγελίσσατο εἰρήνην

Eph 6.15 καὶ ὑποδησάμενοι τοὺς πόδας ἐν ἐτοιμασίᾳ τοῦ
εὐαγγελίου τῆς εἰρήνης

Rom 10.15 ὥς ὥραῖοι οἱ πόδες τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων τὰ ἀγαθὰ

The overlap of phrases and the identical word order which link these texts leave no doubt about the author's knowledge of Isa 52.7.⁵³ Yet,

⁵² This is supported by a comparison between the righteous one as judge, as in Wis 3.7ff, and God himself as judge, as in 5.17.

⁵³ The omission of ἀκοὴν is insignificant. Koch, *Schrift*, 81f argues that the term was probably missing in a pre-Pauline reworking of LXX. Rom 10.15 does not include the verb despite the fact that it would have matched the co-text of Rom 10 quite well (cf vv14,16,18). Unfortunately it remains impossible to ascertain precisely which version was used in Ephesians. Along with Romans and indeed Symmachus and Aquila this letter differs from Isa 52.7 LXX in that a string of ὥς particles is omitted. Koch, *Schrift*, 66 (cf Duhm, *Jesaja*, 391) points out that these particles rest on a misunderstanding by the LXX translator of the Hebrew וְיָגֵן (v6) which amplifies the preceding וְיָגֵן but which has been misunderstood by LXX as a new heading. In Ephesians no such misunderstanding is evident. Romans, Symmachus and Aquila dropped the ὥς particles, thus reflecting a corrective tendency. Ephesians may depend on a reworking of LXX which is unknown to us (cf

it is significant that Ephesians inserts the grammatically puzzling combination ὑποδησάμενοι [+ τοὺς πόδας] + ἐν + ἑτοιμασία. The participle is probably due to stylistic considerations.⁵⁴ A string of participles precedes and follows v15. By introducing the participle, the rhythm and the pattern of vv14-16—*participle + weapon/part of body + virtue*—are maintained.

v14	περιζοσάμενοι	τὴν ὀσφύν	ἐν ἀληθείᾳ	
	ἐνδυσάμενοι	τὸν θώρακα	τῆς δικαιοσύνης	
v15	ὑποδησάμενοι	τοὺς πόδας	ἐν ἑτοιμασίᾳ	τοῦ εὐαγγελίου
				τῆς εἰρήνης
v16	ἀναλαβόντες	τὸν θυρεὸν	τῆς πίστεως	ἐν ᾧ δυνήσεσθε
				πάντα τὰ βέλη τοῦ
				πονηροῦ πεπυρωμένα
				σβέσαι
v17	ἀναλαβόντες	τὴν περικεφαλ.	τοῦ σωτηρίου	
	δέξασθε καὶ	τὴν μάχαιραν	τοῦ πνεύματος	ὃ ἐστὶν
				ῥῆμα θεοῦ

The wording of Isa 52.7 has been adapted to fit this fourfold pattern. At the same time the pattern has been expanded by the reference to the gospel of peace, which also comes from Isaiah and which elucidates the reference to ἑτοιμασία which does not originate from Isaiah. The very fact of this structural deviation demonstrates the significance the author attached to the phrase. Towards the end of v16 there is another deviation, this time an explanatory note on the role of the shield of faith. V17 returns more or less to the pattern of the previous verses. But again there is an explanatory excursus which defines more closely the phrase sword of the Spirit as God's word. What are the reasons for these repeated 'excursions'?

It appears to have escaped the attention of commentators that these explanatory asides refer precisely to those elements of vv14-17 which do not allude directly to Isaiah (ἑτοιμασία, θυρεός and μάχαιρα). In other words, where readers cannot rely on the direct

Koch, *Schrift*, 59ff). But it is perhaps more likely that Ephesians introduced deliberate Changes.

⁵⁴ The verb ὑποδέομαι normally calls for an accusative in order to express either the part of the body that is to be dressed—in this case the feet—or the sandals which are to be put on. In the present instance the participle is followed by the preposition ἐν + the dative of ἑτοιμασία. Semantically, the term is open to debate. Since the combination ὑποδέομαι ἑτοιμασία is a deliberate addition to the word order of Isaiah, a closer examination is called for and will be offered below. For the variety of interpretative proposals regarding ἑτοιμασία see Barth, *Ephesians*, 770.

OT background of the phrases quoted, the author feels the need to provide an explanatory note. Where the material used was taken and appropriated from Israel's Scriptures, such explanatory comments were not needed. This implies and strengthens the view that the material which can be traced directly to the Scriptures—that is v14, the first part of v15 and v17a—should be related to its OT co- and context(s). Clearly the author was confident in his audience's basic ability to discern the OT background of most of the weaponry items listed. Given the overlap between the Isaianic material employed in this passage and the clear traces of Isaiah in ch 2.13-17 and 5.14 this is hardly surprising. It is significant that the writer made a point of summing up the letter's thrust precisely by means of imagery taken over from Isaiah. To determine the rationale for doing so particularly in v15, we must turn to the context of the underlying verse (Isa 52.7).

Together with the Book of Psalms the middle section of Isaiah frequently emphasises the link between God's sovereign power and his displays of goodness.⁵⁵ Ch 52.7 is an outstanding example of this pattern. God's messenger brings good news and proclaims peace for Jerusalem and the nation.⁵⁶ The verse then concludes by affirming God's kingship and reign (cf v10). The verses leading up to v7 encourage Jerusalem to wake up and remove the chains of bondage. In vv5b.6 the Prophet suddenly turns to the oppressors of God's people and accuses them of mocking the Lord's name "all day long".⁵⁷ In contrast, God's people "will know his name" because he is who he claims to be. This train of thought and the focus on knowing God's name is very similar to Isa 40.26, which may underlie Eph 1.19 and 6.10. I have repeatedly noted that the material from Isaiah used in Ephesians is inter-connected via overlapping concepts. In this case the overlapping concept is knowledge of the Lord.⁵⁸

Arnold points out numerous parallels between Isa 52.1-7 and Eph 6. While some of these are too vague or peripheral,⁵⁹ others are vital.

⁵⁵ For details see Westermann, *Isaiah*, 250.

⁵⁶ Historically this is best seen as a reference to the stability resulting from Darius' firm grasp of power (cf Watts, *Isaiah* I, 216).

⁵⁷ Interestingly we know from Rom 2.24 and 10.15 that Paul was specifically interested in these verses.

⁵⁸ To be sure, in ch 40 such knowledge was related to God's superiority over the cosmic elements. Accordingly Eph 1.17-19 links the *knowledge of the Lord* with the *power of his mighty strength* in preparation for the statement about the cosmic powers (v21). In Isa 40 the focus is more on the display of God's sovereignty in history. The messenger is expected to bring back evidence of God's return to Zion.

⁵⁹ So for instance the observation that both Paul and Israel found themselves in bondage, but hoped to be free soon (Arnold, *Powers*, 235).

First, the exhortation to clothe yourself (v1) clearly parallels Eph 6.10. It also provides a further bridge between Isa 11.5; 52.7 and 59.17. Second, the phrase "rise Jerusalem and sit down" [ἀνάστηθι, κάθισον] corresponds to Eph 2.6 which has "you have been raised and seated with Christ". Third, Isa 52.3 (cf 11.10,16; 12.1) and Eph 1.14 and 4.30 point to a future day of salvation.⁶⁰ While Isaiah highlights the salvific dimension of the 'day', Ephesians pictures the 'day' in relation to evil. But both agree in anticipating that salvation will prevail for those relying on God. We can add, lastly, that in both writings peace is found "in the Lord".

Apart from these points of contact, commentators have often noted a discrepancy between the light footwear of the messenger in Isaiah and the supposed heavy Roman boots, or *caliga*, in Ephesians. Barth speaks for most when he laments that Ephesians makes no reference to the "beautiful feet" of the messenger.⁶¹ However, the verb ὑποδέομαι must not be pressed to refer to the typical Roman *caliga*. Its main function is to bring the reference to the ἐτοιμασία τῆς εἰρήνης structurally in line with the remaining panoply list. The lack of explicit reference to footwear probably shows that the author did not have the Roman studded boot in view. Although his implication seems to have been light sandals, it remains doubtful whether the author had any interest in the footwear. The lack of reference to light sandals probably shows that the writer did not identify his audience with the Lord's messenger of Isa 52. Consequently the focus is on the message, not the messenger.

Conclusion

The early Christian parenetic patterns first isolated by Carrington have been expanded in Eph 6.10ff by systematically introducing OT material as well as language describing the evil powers involved in the Christian struggle. The main source which throws light on the nature of this struggle is not the Qumran literature, but Israel's Bible. The author's roots, particularly in Isaiah, are evident not only from the verbal overlap in ch 6 and elsewhere in the epistle, but also from the significant coherence between the original function of the material quoted from or alluded to in the OT and the thrust of Eph 6 itself. On the basis of these observations the struggle envisaged in these verses can now be interpreted afresh. I shall focus primarily on

⁶⁰ Cf λυτρόω in all three verses. The emphasis falls on the liberation from the oppressing powers.

⁶¹ Barth, *Ephesians*, 770 n74.

those interpretative issues which are directly related to the use of the OT.

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE POWERS - A FRESH INTERPRETATION

There are six main aspects of the description of the struggle that have given rise to controversy. They include: its *temporal setting*; the possibility of *losing the struggle*; the *nature of the struggle* (offensive or defensive?); the *quality of the weapons* used (virtues or spiritual gifts?); the *persons participating* in the struggle, and the *metaphorical referent* of the weaponry. It is the purpose of this section to throw light on these aspects by bringing the OT evidence to bear on them.

Present versus Future - The Temporal Setting of the Struggle

The debate about the timing of the struggle can be illustrated by comparing the positions of Dibelius and Lindemann. The former represents one extreme when he holds that the evil day stands for the end of the world.⁶² The latter goes to the opposite extreme by maintaining what has come to be called a *fully realised eschatology*.⁶³ Lindemann is right in pointing to ch 5.16 where the author has in view present moments of crisis (days), rather than the future. He is at the same time wrong when he ignores the apocalyptic overtones⁶⁴ of the phrase ...τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ πονηρᾷ elsewhere and plays down temporal categories in Ephesians in general.⁶⁵

The singular "day" (cf 5.16 - "days") combines with the future verb δυνήσθαι to suggest at least some emphasis on the future. Nevertheless the author is convinced that the future has a bearing on the present (ch 1.14; 2.5-7; 4.30; 5.5,27 and 6.8,13).⁶⁶ Whereas "day" often denotes the time of salvation following the present darkness,⁶⁷

⁶² Dibelius, *Epheser*, 98. Cf 1 Thes 2.3.

⁶³ Lindemann, *Zeit*, 64f and *Epheser*, 114.

⁶⁴ For the Qumran evidence see Mussner, *Epheser*, 168. Also Dan 12.1 *et al.* For the use of the phrase in apocalyptic Judaism see Arnold, *Powers*, 251 n56.

⁶⁵ Better Barth, *Epheser*, 804f and Gnllka, *Epheser*, 308. Lindemann's attempt to distinguish between Paul and the author of Ephesians on the basis of diverging eschatological concepts ignores that Gal 1.4 also knows of "this present evil age" (cf Eph 5.16). It also ignores that even Eph 5.16 combines the 'realised' dimension of the evil day with a look forward to the impending end. Ch 6.13 may well have a similar thrust.

⁶⁶ To this list Lincoln, *Paradise*, 167 adds the concepts of growing and filling (ch 2.21; 3.9; 4.13,15f).

⁶⁷ Lövestam, *Wakefulness*, 50 and 54.

Ephesians places more emphasis on the present impact of evil but without losing sight of the future culmination of the presence of evil (...τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ πονηρᾷ). In Isaiah God's people are also seen as already engaged in a struggle against the hostile powers. In ch 59 the weaponry is worn and used by God himself, in ch 11 by God's servant. In Ephesians the weapons are handed to the believers. The obvious implication is that the believers are expected to use them immediately and yet to be ready to withstand—something mentioned no less than three times in vv11-14—between "now" and the "evil day". Clearly the author based the suitability of the material from Isaiah on the fact that both God's people at the time of the Prophet and the intended addressees of Ephesians were aware that the struggle had already started. This distinguishes both sources from the Qumran literature, which conceives of the struggle against the hostile powers as strictly a future event. The author was probably aware of the addressees' specific situation. Arnold's attempt to uncover the specific background into which this letter was written is in principle justified. In regard to the temporal setting of the struggle it is concluded that a mediating position between Dibelius and Lindemann, which takes on board elements from both sides, is preferable.

A Possibility of Losing the Struggle?

Not many commentators have contemplated the question of whether or not Ephesians implies definite success for the believers' struggle against evil. Among those who have is Lindemann who reaches a positive conclusion based on ch 2.6, which states that believers are seated with Christ.⁶⁸ In direct contrast, Schlier argues for a genuinely open outcome of the struggle envisaged, based on the possibility that believers might fail to put on the armour.⁶⁹ A solution to this dilemma is vital for understanding the interplay of soteriology and ethics in Ephesians. In Schlier's scenario ethics tend to become a direct function of the believer's hope of salvation. For Lindemann the believer's practical conduct would appear to be a mere re-enactment of an already guaranteed salvation.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Against this blending of statements about the transcendental and forensic reality of faith with a description of inner-worldly confrontation see Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 277.

⁶⁹ Schlier, *Epheser*, 294.

⁷⁰ Here Lindemann sees a major difference between Paul (1 Thes 5.8-10) and the author of Ephesians who, he claims, ignores temporal categories in favour of

There seems to be some tension between Lindemann's triumphalistic interpretation and the need to put on the armour.⁷¹ If, as Lindemann holds, the situation of ch 2.7 is presupposed, why, one might ask, would the struggle take centre stage in the author's concluding argument at all? Lindemann, who is aware of the question, is content to argue that there is no reason.⁷² A major weakness in Lindemann's argument is his failure to give the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ (ch 2.6) its full weight.⁷³ For the author Christ's representative victory needs to be worked out in day to day life. On this level the possibility of defeat is no doubt implied. It is therefore far from obvious and indeed highly unlikely that ch 2.5-7 should be regarded as the sole framework for the interpretation of the panoply list in ch 6.

In support of his thesis of guaranteed victory Lindemann also points to his assumption that Ephesians is indebted to Wis 5.17ff.⁷⁴ In Wisdom he detects a tendency to transform the apocalyptic picture of the end-time struggle into a matter of the present and the past. The enemies are thought to have been 'finished off' already.⁷⁵ In this, Lindemann claims, Ephesians followed the Wisdom tradition. Hence, his argument runs, the believers' struggle must be seen as already having been decided. This line of argument must be strongly challenged. The "tendency" Lindemann claims to have discovered in Wis 5 is highly doubtful. Vv13-15 clearly highlight God's future judgment of the hostile powers. The sheer predominance of future tense verbs in vv16,23d led Charles to note the "eschatological" nature of the passage in the margin of his edition.⁷⁶ In this respect Wisdom is entirely in keeping with Isaiah, notably chs 11.3-5; 41.11; 52.3 and 59.18. Success on the battlefield depends entirely on God's presence and support. Ultimate salvation, on account of belonging to the faithful remnant, and the possibility of defeat in battle are not

spatial ones, thus not distinguishing between present reality and future hope (*Zeit*, 66).

⁷¹ Lindemann also ignores the possibility stated in ch 4.27 that believers "give room to the devil".

⁷² Ibid, 64.

⁷³ We have here an interesting example of Lindemann's hermeneutical inconsistency. In attempting to argue that Ephesians substitutes spatial for temporal categories, he ignores the temporal thrust of the evil day to come. At the same time he ignores the lack of temporal categories in ch 2.6 and calls the Christian conduct a „(Nach-) Vollzug des bereits Geschehenen“ (ibid, 65).

⁷⁴ Whether or not this assumption is justified is difficult to judge. Cf my discussion of this matter above.

⁷⁵ Lindemann, *Zeit*, 65.

⁷⁶ Charles, "Wisdom", 543.

irreconcilable aspects of God's reign. The concept of what could be termed a 'pre-fabricated victory' over the hostile powers which is to be re-enacted as a 'struggle' is illogical and absent from the thought world of both Isaiah and Wisdom. The notion that the onslaught of hostile powers needs to be countered by employing God's armour forms the very background of the Prophet's message. The clear implication is that anything other than relying on God's panoply leads inevitably to defeat. Conversely, the Prophet's confidence in pointing to future salvation from the enemies is based on the certain prospect of victory inherent in the offer and acceptance of the divine panoply. Given the author's deliberate and direct reiteration of the Prophet's message, it appears that Ephesians also reflects the notion that victory and defeat in the believers' ongoing struggle against evil powers depend entirely on whether God's people accept the offer of the divine panoply.

Offensive and Defensive Dimensions of the Struggle?

The defensive component of the struggle described in Eph 6 is not in dispute.⁷⁷ What is a matter of debate is whether from the believer's point of view the struggle is purely defensive, or whether it also involves an offensive thrust.⁷⁸ Arnold, for instance, insists that the ethical directives of ch 6 have by implication an offensive thrust. However, as pointed out earlier in this chapter, the term *πάλη* would not be ideal to bring out the attractiveness of Christian ethics. The author's concern to highlight the need for believers to withstand the evil powers *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* should not be confused with ethical directives offered elsewhere in the epistle. The struggle envisaged in ch 6.10ff is not only "against blood and flesh".

A major component in the argument of those in favour of finding offensive aspects of the struggle is the use of the term *μάχαιρα*, that is the short sword as opposed to the longer *ῥομφαία*. It is sometimes argued that the *μάχαιρα* "was the crucial offensive weapon in close combat."⁷⁹ That the short sword was a close combat weapon need not be doubted. But does this mean that it was considered an offensive weapon? This cannot be demonstrated and is probably even unlikely. In any event, the enormous variety of uses of this term in the LXX

⁷⁷ Most of the panoply items listed are clearly defensive, especially the breast plate, shield and helmet. As for the short sword it is of course true that close combat is envisaged, but this in itself does not make it an offensive weapon.

⁷⁸ Arnold, *Powers*, 278f.

⁷⁹ So Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 451.

and in the NT⁸⁰ makes it difficult to be dogmatic at this point. Perhaps it is best to understand the term in a way similar to its use in Rev 6.4, that is as a symbol for carnage.⁸¹ This suggestion will be taken further as part of the discussion of possible metaphorical referents of the panoply passage.

Arnold links the proposal that the panoply passage includes offensive notions to the phrase "readiness of the gospel" (v15). However, the term ἑτοιμασία should not be paraphrased as "readiness to proclaim",⁸² but as "readiness of the gospel", if not "firmness of the gospel".⁸³ The term is passive and denotes attitude or position, not action. As Buscarlet correctly points out, being shod with sandals only makes sense when seeking a firm foothold. For a fast-running messenger sandals would mean an impediment.⁸⁴ If, as Arnold believes, the author was thinking of proclaiming the gospel as an offensive measure, he would either have employed the imagery of Isaiah (feet) or of the Roman steel-studded *caliga*, the main purpose of which was offensive in that they enabled the soldier to trample down the enemy. If it be retorted that such imagery would have been incompatible with the nature of the gospel, it may be pointed out that indeed the whole notion of attacking the spiritual powers of darkness in the heavenly realm by exposing them to the proclamation of the gospel would be difficult to comprehend.⁸⁵ It is better not to overemphasise any 'offensive' element of the Christian panoply. Instead, the phrase "readiness of the gospel" may be interpreted as denoting the firmness offered by the gospel to those who are "in Christ".⁸⁶ This notion is brought out in the NEB translation "give you a firm footing". Admittedly this interpretation implies that Ephesians departs at this point from Isa 52. That this is indeed the case can be supported from the structural observation made above that

⁸⁰ Details are found in Michaelis, "μάχηται", 530-3.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Pace Arnold, *Powers*, 279. Similar Grundmann, "ἑτοιμασία", 706.

⁸³ For the latter see Barth, *Epheser*, 770. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 448f questions Barth's interpretation, suggesting that ἑτοιμασία "nowhere actually means firm footing" in the LXX. Nevertheless, in at least four out of eight occurrences a translation such as firmness is quite possible (Ps 9.38; 88.14; II Esdras 2.68 and 3.3; cf also possibly 1 Kgs 13.13 and Ps 107.1; other relevant texts are Matt 24.44 and Luke 12.40). This is ignored in Bauer, "ἑτοιμασία", 626.

⁸⁴ Buscarlet, "Preparation", 38-40.

⁸⁵ Even Eph 3.10 does not entertain such a notion. It is the very existence of the church as the body of Christ which proclaims God's wisdom—not the gospel—to the powers.

⁸⁶ Cf Col 1.23.

ἐτοιμασία forms a deliberate addition to the motifs taken over from Isaiah.

While it has now become clear that ἐτοιμασία in v15 may denote the believers' firmness based on the gospel rather than its proclamation as a means of counter-offensive, it has yet to be established whether the term gospel here should be interpreted subjectively or objectively. I turn, therefore, to the question of the quality of the weaponry offered: should we understand the panoply items as virtues or as gifts?

The Quality of the Panoply Offered - Virtues or Gifts?

The weapons listed in vv14-17 have repeatedly been described as virtues.⁸⁷ Alternatively they could be regarded as spiritual gifts.⁸⁸ It is by no means inconceivable that some weapons fall into both categories. The problem can be focused on the interpretation of the imperative δέξασθε (v17). While the term itself offers little assistance—it can be translated subjectively or objectively—Wild suggests that it introduces a shift from the listing of virtues to that of spiritual gifts.⁸⁹ Clearly each weapon must be examined individually.

"Truth buckled around your waist" - (v14)

We saw that in Isa 11 truth is assumed to be a divine bestowment on God's warrior (cf v2). This is despite the fact that truthfulness is closely linked with what is pleasing to God (vv3,5). The OT evidence would thus support the objective interpretation ("receive"). Interestingly, in the only occurrence in Isaiah of the girding-one's-loins metaphor (Isa 45.5) it is stressed that "it is God who does these things" (cf ch 44.24 and 45.7).

It cannot be denied that Ephesians places significant weight on ethical exhortation. This is clear, for instance, from the phrase "what is pleasing to God" in ch 5.10. Nevertheless Wild's suggested transition between ch 6.9 and v10 is attractive, especially as it can be supported from some of the key terms employed in vv10ff. For instance, elsewhere in the epistle *truth* refers to the truth of the gospel (1.13; 4.15,21). In ch 4.24 the term stands for a divine characteristic which has been conferred on the "new man". On the basis of the

⁸⁷ Abbott, *Ephesians*, 185; Houlden, *Ephesians*, Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 310 and Mitton, *Ephesians*, 225.

⁸⁸ Cf Arnold, *Powers*, 241. Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 457 embraces both views.

⁸⁹ Wild, "Warrior" 297.

overlap between ch 4.29⁹⁰ and 1.13 it is probable that the author is still thinking along the same lines as in ch 1. It follows that ch 4.24 is also an allusion to the gospel. This line of argument can be extended to ch 6.14. Both verses couple *truth* with *righteousness*. Given that in ch 4.24 the former qualifies the latter, the same is probably true in ch 6.14. It is therefore best to interpret the phrase "truth buckled around your waist" in line with other occurrences in the epistle and with the objective understanding of truth in Isa 11.⁹¹ The readers are encouraged to rely on the truthfulness of the gospel as a divine gift.

"Clothed with the breastplate of righteousness" - (v14)

The readers are by now familiar with the concept of righteousness (cf 4.24 and 5.9). As mentioned above, *righteousness* in ch 4.24 is qualified by *truth*, which in turn relates back to the author's exposition of the gospel for both Jews and gentiles. Righteousness is described as a direct result of God having created a new man. In ch 5.9 the verb περιπατεῖν might suggest an understanding of righteousness as a human virtue. However, every time περιπατεῖν introduces ethical advice, it is followed or preceded by a reference to the driving force behind ethical conduct.⁹² Even good works are said to have been created beforehand by God (ch 2.10). Similarly the new man to be put on is created by God (ch 4.24). The author is concerned to relate the believers' ethical behaviour (περιπατεῖν) to God's parameters. Hence ch 5.9f talks of the fruit of the light as *goodness*, *righteousness* and *truth*. Which of these emphases is in view in ch 6.14?

Again some clarification can be achieved by consulting the Scriptural background of v14. Contrary to Lindemann's claims,⁹³ the Prophet's decisive criterion is God's righteousness. The fact that God's panoply is said in Isa 11 to have been transferred to his agent does not alter the observation that it remains God's weaponry. Similarly in Eph: the fact that YHWH's weapons are now offered to the followers of his son does not turn them into virtues.

⁹⁰ For the role of Isa 63.10 in ch 4.30 see also my discussion of Eph 4.25ff in chapter five.

⁹¹ The difference compared with Isaiah is of course that Ephesians specifically identifies *truth* and *gospel*.

⁹² Cf 2.2 "according to the rulers"; 4.1 "worthy of your calling"; 4.17 "in the futility of their thinking"; 5.2 "in the love of [God]"; 5.15 "in wisdom", ie according to God's will (cf v17).

⁹³ Lindemann, *Epheser*, 114 detects in δικαιοσύνη (Isa 59.17 - LXX) the notion of „Rechtschaffenheit“, thus identifying righteousness as a human virtue. He ignores that the Prophet's very concern was to bring out the lack of human „Rechtschaffenheit“ (v15) and the need for establishing God's righteousness instead.

Righteousness is more likely seen forensically, that is as God's sovereign verdict on those who are ἐν Χριστῷ (ch 1.13f). Hence it can form a reliable basis for the struggle at hand. Even in Isa 59, God's positive verdict presupposed repentance by those "among Jacob" for whom the redeemer is coming (v20). Moreover, protection of God's people depends vitally on God crushing his enemies (Isa 59.18). Similarly in Ephesians where the believers' successful stand against the evil powers is based on Christ's successful fight against the enemies (cf 1.22 and 4.8). Success does not primarily depend on righteousness as a human virtue, but on righteousness as God's gift through Christ.⁹⁴ This coheres with Rom 13.12-14 where putting on the weaponry is identified with putting on Christ himself. At the same time it is clear from chs 4.24 and 5.9 that despite the primacy of gift over virtue the two must not be separated artificially.

"The firmness of the gospel of peace" - (v15)

Much has been said already about the role of Isa 52.7 in this verse.⁹⁵ It remains to recall that there are no grounds for inserting the word 'proclamation' or a similar term. The term ἐτοιμασία may well mean *firmness*. V15 brings together the themes of the preceding verse: The gospel alone is truth and offers righteousness. It provides a firm foundation on which the enemy can be faced precisely because Christ's victory on the cross is at the very centre of the gospel (ch 2.16). "Peace" here is not an offer to the enemy but the peace of mind resulting from reliance on God in the midst of adverse circumstances. As the Prophet puts it in the underlying passage: beautiful are the feet of the messenger who announces to Zion that God rules as king (Isa 52.7). Here too the emphasis is on God's doing.

"The shield of faith" - v16

This is a phrase which does not have one single definitive OT parallel, and we find that instead the author supplied an explanatory comment ("...with which you can extinguish the burning arrows of the evil one"). Despite the lack of specific OT parallel we have to consider this phrase as it is usually interpreted subjectively, that is as a call for faith as a human response, rather than as an offer of a divine gift.⁹⁶ Undoubtedly faith as a human response could be in

⁹⁴ Here I agree with Conzelmann, *Epheser*, 123.

⁹⁵ See above pp192ff.

⁹⁶ Cf eg Abbott, *Ephesians* 186 and Bruce, *Ephesians*, 408. Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 285 attempts to hold together faith as a human response and faith as a divine gift. Barth, *Ephesians*, 772f is in favour of interpreting πίστις as including the element of God's faithfulness.

view here. But it is worth considering whether πίστις should be interpreted as faithfulness, thus denoting Christ's faithfulness on behalf of the believers.⁹⁷ This would be entirely in keeping with the exhortation at the beginning of the passage to become strong in the Lord and to put on God's panoply (vv10f), and also with the concept of putting on the new man created by and according to God (Eph 2.15; 4.24).⁹⁸ It would, furthermore, be in line with the use of shield imagery throughout the Psalms. Having said that, earlier references in the letter to πίστις refer to the human response of faith (1.13-15; 3.12,17). It seems therefore sensible to conclude that in 6.16 the author may in Pauline fashion be thinking of the interplay of God's doing in Christ and the Christian response to it referred to earlier in the epistle (*fides qua creditur*).⁹⁹

"The helmet of salvation" - v17.

Eph 2.5-9 puts it beyond doubt that salvation is regarded solely as God's gift. In the underlying OT passage (Isa 59.17) God is pictured as setting out to achieve both the destruction of his people's enemies as well as salvation for his people. Whereas, according to the Prophet, God's anger was directed against the gentiles (v18), Ephesians includes those gentiles who are in Christ among the ones to be saved (Eph 2.11ff). In Ephesians the emphasis is even more on the fact of the salvation: the helmet of protection is worn by believers themselves. But, of course, salvation remains God's gift.

"The sword of the spirit" - v17.

We have seen above that the influence of Isaiah on this formulation was only indirect, and possibly via Isa 49.2. As the phrase has no single direct OT parallel, the author supplied it with the explanatory remark ὁ ἐστὶν ῥῆμα θεοῦ, thus indicating the 'objective' nature of this gift: the Spirit offers support through God's word. Possibly this is an allusion to Israel's Scriptures which can still supply encouragement for those who are ἐν Χριστῷ as shown by the author's own appropriation of OT motifs in the preceding verses. The alternative, which, on balance, might be preferable,¹⁰⁰ is to recognise

⁹⁷ Pauline parallels for holding together faith as human response and faithfulness as the divine basis for the human response include Rom 3.22,26; Gal 2.16,20; 3.22 and possibly Phil 3.9.

⁹⁸ For Pauline parallels see especially 1 Thes 5.8; Gal 3.28—which, incidentally, follows on the heels of πίστις with the meaning of *faithfulness* (v22)—and Rom 13.12.

⁹⁹ Rom 3.22-6; Gal 2.16-20; 3.22; Phil 3.9.

¹⁰⁰ Not least so in the light of Heb 4.12 which compares the word of God with a sword in order to illustrate its power of judgment.

the indirect link between v17 and Isa 11.4 and to understand the phrase "sword of the Spirit which is the word of God" as a veiled reference to God's judgement of the opponents. If so, v17 summarily reminds its readers of two divine characteristics which need to be internalised by those who brace themselves for the culmination of the struggle: God is the saviour of those who put on his panoply; by the same token he is the judge of those who aim their flaming arrows at his people. This basic notion is also present in Isa 59.17 (cf Eph 6.17), highlighting again the coherence of the material or phraseology which the author obtained from Isaiah.

Conclusion

All the weapons listed denote primarily God's gifts. Gnllka's assertion that the weaponry leads to victory "if used correctly"¹⁰¹ is therefore beside the point. It is not a case of correct usage but of whether or not the divine weaponry has been received or put on (vv13,16,17). Despite some degree of ambiguity the phrase "shield of faith" almost certainly includes the notion of God's or Christ's faithfulness which forms the basis of faith as a human response.

METAPHOR AND AUDIENCE - CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

It is time to return to a suggestion made in the introduction to this chapter which concerns the question of the author's intended metaphorical referent of the Christian panoply. Traditionally the panoply has been compared with a Roman soldier's military outfit. However, in view of the defensive thrust of the passage, it may be useful to examine whether this understanding ought to be supplemented. Secondly, is it conceivable that the author has employed imagery borrowed from Isaiah because of what he perceived to be fundamental similarities between the religious experience of Israel at the time of the Prophet and his own audience in Western Asia Minor?

The Metaphorical Referent of the Panoply

Methodologically we must distinguish between the source of the author's metaphor and the metaphorical referent evoked by the imagery in the recipients' minds.

¹⁰¹ Gnllka, *Epheser*, 314.

The Source of the Imagery

There are two main options for the source of the imagery: the Roman military outfit and the OT weaponry lists associated with YHWH's warfare on behalf of his people. The evidence examined above favours the second option, although the two need not be mutually exclusive.¹⁰² Three out of six panoply items are direct quotations from Isa 11 and 59: the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness and the helmet of salvation. The man-sized shield can be paralleled in the Psalms, albeit without the genitive τῆς πίστεως. Furthermore, we saw that the peace messenger recalls Isa 52. Lastly, the sword of the spirit may have a latent parallel in Isa 11 and 49. While some of these weapons coincide with those used by Roman soldiers,¹⁰³ the author avoided offensive weapons such as the spear, the long sword and the lance.¹⁰⁴ The typical Roman *caliga* are also missing,¹⁰⁵ and even the helmet mentioned (περικεφαλαίον) is not identical with that traditionally worn by Roman soldiers (κράνος). Although a περικεφαλαίον could be worn as part of a military outfit, it is significant that it also played an important role in gladiatorial fights.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps it is useful to supplement the traditional interpretation of Eph 6.10-17, along the lines of the Roman battle armour,¹⁰⁷ with an appreciation of the panoply's OT background, and by recognising the possibility that the author's imagery may well in part have alluded to arena fighting as well.

The emphasis in Ephesians falls squarely on the defensive aspects of the spiritual(?) wrestling match. Believers are exhorted to resist, not to attack.¹⁰⁸ The fact that their stance should be characterised by peace has caused some commentators to speak of a "paradox of peace".¹⁰⁹ This is a misunderstanding caused by a possibly too

¹⁰² The extent to which the Roman military outfit provided the contemporary referent for the author's imagery has to be examined below.

¹⁰³ Oepke, "πανοπλία", 300ff. These include only the short dagger and the defensive shield, both of which are not peculiarly Roman weapons.

¹⁰⁴ Oepke (pp296-300) finds it difficult to explain these omissions. Part of the explanation is undoubtedly the OT background of the weaponry imagery used. But it is possible that the author was particularly interested in the defensive weapons used in arena fighting, the main exception being the fiery darts, of course.

¹⁰⁵ Contra Gnika, *Epheser*, 311.

¹⁰⁶ For the evidence of Oepke, "πανοπλία", 314.

¹⁰⁷ Carr, *Angels*, 197 and Schnackenburg, *Epheser*, 278.

¹⁰⁸ The term used for resisting is ἵστημι, that for the struggle πάλη. The wrestling metaphor is juxtaposed with farming and military imagery in 2 Tim 2.3-5, but given that πάλη must not simply be equated with a military struggle (cf Greeven, "πάλη", 721), this should not be seen as a mixing of metaphors.

¹⁰⁹ vonHarnack first spoke of a "lofty paradox" (Barth, *Ephesians*, 770).

exclusive identification of the Ephesian panoply with the Roman armour described by Josephus and Polybius. Only when peace is understood as an offensive weapon, similar to those weapons used by the Roman army, do we have a 'paradox of peace'. The paradox disappears if, in keeping with the OT evidence discussed earlier, peace is interpreted as a state of mind indicative of confidence in God, and if the defensive nature of the struggle envisaged is taken seriously.¹¹⁰ Peace is no longer a means of waging war, but an attitude based on the gospel (v15), with which the enemy can be faced. It is the peace of knowing that one is seated with Christ at the right hand of God (ch 2.6).

It may be useful to supplement the traditional view which regards military combat as the sole metaphorical referent of the Ephesian panoply. Robinson rightly recognises this and instead points us to the divine warrior of Israel's prophetic tradition.¹¹¹ But would the recipients have looked to Israel's Scriptures for clarification? I have repeatedly suggested that throughout Ephesians the author indeed appears to have presupposed some OT knowledge by at least part of his audience. However, this leaves open the question of how the audience would have related the metaphor to its own background.

Contemporary Referent

As the traditional understanding of the metaphorical referent of the Christian panoply is not entirely satisfactory, I suggested as a further contemporary referent the framework of arena fighting which was punishment for serious offenders against the state. The panoply metaphor may well have been applied by the author with *venationes*, or 'hunting events', in mind.¹¹² Such 'games' often involved animals as well as humans. They were first introduced in Ephesus in 71/70

¹¹⁰ It is noteworthy that the writer preferred the NT *hapax legomenon* πάλη ("wrestling match") to the much more common πόλεμος ("war"). Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 443f argues that πάλη can also be used of military battles. In this connection he points to 2 Macc 10.28; 14.18 and 15.9. But the term employed there is in fact ἀγών, not πάλη. While it is true that Philo uses πάλη metaphorically for the ascetic struggle (*Mut Nom*, 14; *Leg All*, 190; cf Dibelius-Greeven, "πάλη", 721), he can do so precisely because of the term's athletic or wrestling connotations.

¹¹¹ Robinson, *Ephesians*, 133.

¹¹² Balsdon, *Life*, 311. See also Carcopino's graphic but well sourced account of *venationes* in first-century Rome (*Life*, 236-44). Carcopino shows how different groups of fighters used different weapons. The fact that some of the weapons mentioned—spears, firebrands, bows, lances and long daggers—do not overlap with those mentioned in Ephesians is best explained on the basis of the clear OT influence on our text. As indicated earlier, we need to distinguish between the OT source for some of the weapons mentioned and the author's intended contemporary metaphorical referent.

BC.¹¹³ Three kinds of spectacles must be distinguished: first, armed men fighting wild animals; second, animals fighting animals, and third, unarmed humans being exposed to starved beasts. The last category involved mainly convicted prisoners who had been condemned to death. The only possible way to avoid death was repeatedly to excel in bravery and to withstand the opponent, animal or human, long enough to impress the audience which might then cheer for a pardon. Usually more than one successful defense was needed before a pardon was considered. On other occasions armed prisoners had to kill unarmed fellow prisoners before themselves being unarmed and killed by other armed prisoners.¹¹⁴

In 1 Cor 15.32 Paul claims to have fought wild beasts at Ephesus. Similarly 2 Tim 4.17 states that "I was saved from the mouth of the lion".¹¹⁵ Regardless of whether these statements are to be considered literally¹¹⁶ or metaphorically,¹¹⁷ Paul could hardly have employed the imagery in a letter to the Corinthians if having to fight wild beasts in Ephesus had not been a real possibility: the Corinthians were certainly aware of the reality of gladiatorial fights against wild beasts in the arena of Corinth.¹¹⁸ No doubt they were equally aware of similar facilities in Ephesus and therefore in Western Asia Minor as a whole.¹¹⁹

Carr rightly observed that the NT, and indeed the early apostolic fathers, rarely employ a straightforward military metaphor for the Christian life.¹²⁰ The reason for this is most likely that no explicit distinction was made between Christ's victory over evil powers and the believer's struggle against evil. Christ's victory does not have to be repeated by the believer. Especially in Ephesians the author makes a point of using OT material to stress that the powers have been subjected under Christ by God (ch 1.22; 4.8). The application to believers of a metaphor suggestive of the need to take the struggle offensively to the evil forces might have sent misleading signals. In contrast to the Qumran War Scroll, there is no suggestion here of believers having to push forward their front lines in the decisive

¹¹³ Yamauchi, *Cities*, 92. See also I.H. Arnold, "Festivals", 22.

¹¹⁴ Carcopino, *Life*, 241-44. Sometimes convicts were condemned to live as gladiators (Balsdon, *Life*, 187).

¹¹⁵ For the question of the genuinely Pauline origin of this statement cf Harrison, *Problem*, 121ff.

¹¹⁶ For supporters of a literal understanding see Osborne, "Beasts", 225 n2.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid* n3. See furthermore Malherbe, "Beasts", 71-80.

¹¹⁸ O'Connor, *Corinth*, 96 and Hunkin, "1 Corinthians 15:32", 281f.

¹¹⁹ Yamauchi, *Cities*, 92f.

¹²⁰ Carr, *Angels*, 104f.

battle. Nor is it suggested in v15 that believers should somehow constitute a peaceful version of the Roman army.¹²¹ While the traditionally suggested 'Roman soldier' background of the imagery is not to be ruled out,¹²² the defensive aspects of the panoply are suggestive also of an arena setting where believers are portrayed as having to withstand (ἵστημι) the agents of the oppressing powers. The implied suggestion is, perhaps, that if occasionally unarmed prisoners had succeeded in withstanding the wild beasts long enough for the crowd to express its preference for a pardon, how much more can God's defensive panoply protect the believer until the day of final salvation (ch 4.30).

This proposal must be tested against the terminology used in the four verses leading up to the actual panoply list (vv10-13). Can we glean from this any information about the precise nature of the struggle envisaged?

Terminological Ramifications

It cannot be disputed that πανοπλία (vv10,13) denotes not so much a specific set of arms, but the list of weapons given in vv14-17. Perhaps the original audience is as likely to have associated this list with arena fighting as with the Roman army. The former was probably more common than a display of Roman soldiers in full battle gear. Western Asia Minor was dominated by Ephesus, a city which had at least two sites that could be used for such arena fighting on a regular basis.¹²³ It is impossible to say whether or not the author actually suspected that believers were subjected to such horrendous ordeals by the opposing powers, loyal to the all-dominating Artemis cult. Nor can we say confidently whether the fighting alluded to would have involved armed opponents or wild beasts. Neither of these uncertainties affects the possibility that the metaphorical referent of the passage consists, at least in part, of arena punishment for those opposed to or disloyal towards the dominating cult.¹²⁴ Whether or not Christians were *actually* subjected to arena fighting,

¹²¹ For the use of εἰρήνη for an awareness of the salvation offered by the gospel see Rom 10.10-15. This text also quotes Isa 52.7 (cf Acts 10.36 and of course Eph 2.17). The author does for the persecuted Christians of Western Asia Minor what the messenger of peace did for the people of Israel (Isa 52.7).

¹²² The fiery darts are difficult to explain in an arena setting.

¹²³ There was the main theatre located at the end of the famous Arcadian road, but also the stadium located at the edge of the city, not far from the imposing Artemision (cf Yamauchi, *Cities*, 80 and 92-4; for further details see also Robert, *Gladiateurs*, *ad loc*).

¹²⁴ The fiery arrows (v16) are of course known primarily from ancient warfare, not from an arena context, although this cannot be excluded.

there may well have been the danger of it happening. The author's reassurance for these believers is based primarily on the proven success of the divine panoply (Isaiah). Christian arena victims may not be supplied with Roman weaponry to defend themselves, the author appears to argue, but if they trust in God's strength (v10) they will be equipped with his own invisible but unfailing and protective¹²⁵ weaponry.¹²⁶

A further issue concerning the nature of the struggle envisaged centres on the phrase αἷμα καὶ σάρκα which reverses the usual Pauline order.¹²⁷ A possible explanation has been offered by Percy:¹²⁸ for Paul σάρχ usually stands for the 'old man' which must be put off (Rom 8.13 and Gal 5.17). In Percy's view our writer wants to stress the spiritual 'powers' background of the physical enemies facing believers. At the same time he wants to avoid the potential misunderstanding of interpreting the phrase "we do not struggle against flesh and blood" as a denial of the necessity to withstand sinful nature (σάρχ). Whether or not Percy is right, the change of word order may even reflect the author's implied arena metaphor. The thrust of v12 could then be paraphrased as follows: You may think that your main threat comes from physical opponents and the possibility of death in the arena. However, the decisive aspect is the struggle fought on God's level or ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις. On that level the powers have been defeated already.¹²⁹

The decisive difference between this interpretation and Lindemann's view is that Christ's achieved victory must still be applied by putting on God's weaponry. Given the panoply items listed, the enemies' attacks are potentially directed against the very

¹²⁵ God's offensive weapons according to Isa 11.4 ("strike with the rod of his mouth"), Isa 57.17 ("garments of vengeance" and "cloak of zeal") and v19 ("breath which drives the enemy away") have deliberately been omitted.

¹²⁶ The term κατεργάζομαι is used in Pauline literature for accomplishing, not overpowering, as rightly pointed out by Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 446 against Schlier, *Epheser*, 293 and Mitton, *Ephesians*, 223. This is in keeping with the repeated use of ἵστημι.

¹²⁷ Paul's normal order for expressing physical humanity is flesh and blood (Gal 1.16; 1 Cor 15.50). Heb 2.14 reverses this word order, possibly to underline the physical reality of Jesus' death—cf the second half of the verse. Perhaps Eph 6.12 reverses the order possibly to allude to the physical violence involved in facing the enemy. If so, v12 does not suggest that the struggle has nothing to do with human opponents, but that the more important dimension is the spiritual reality behind the human agents of evil.

¹²⁸ Percy, *Probleme*, 184.

¹²⁹ Eph 1.10,21f; 4.8; compare also the possible interplay of salvation and judgement in ch 6.17.

life of believers. If believers occasionally faced possible death in the arena, the author's point would be that the physical threat is a mere manifestation of the more decisive spiritual dimension. If this was not the case, the physical metaphor would have been used for a spiritual situation. I am inclined to favour the former option. The metaphor itself seems to presuppose at least the possibility of condemnation to death by arena punishment for believers.¹³⁰

Further evidence as to the nature of the struggle is provided by the reference to the evil day (v13).¹³¹ The apocalyptic background of the phrase has been taken to indicate a "time of climactic tribulation which will immediately precede the end of the world".¹³² Lindemann's 'over-realised' interpretation which links ch 6.13 (singular) with ch 5.16 ("evil days"),¹³³ ignores the fact that the author carefully distinguishes between present and future (cf ch 4.30). Haupt took up Bengel's proposal and saw here a reference to the individual believer's day of death.¹³⁴ It might be countered that the day of death could be seen as a happy occasion for the believer (Phil 1.23). However, if my suggestion to interpret the passage not only in the light of Roman army weaponry but also against the backdrop of the threat of arena fighting is valid, this objection loses its force as the emphasis would then be on the impending suffering rather than on the ultimate victory. Such a scenario of persecution would fit the apocalyptic connotations of the phrase used.¹³⁵

Audience-critical Implications

The question of whether the author's use of the OT can throw light on the readers' religio-cultural background must be distinguished from the suggestion that the historical context of the relevant OT material

¹³⁰ It is not necessary to assume that this could only have formed part of a major persecution. Clearly the Artemis cult alone would have been sufficiently intolerant towards Christianity to allow for arena executions.

¹³¹ The New English Bible translates "when things are at their worst"; but the REB reverts to "evil day".

¹³² Lincoln, *Paradise*, 166. Cf 1 Enoch 50.2; 55.3; 63.8; 96.2; 99.4; Jub 23; Test Lev 5.5 and the Assumption of Moses 1.18; also 1QM 15.12 and 18.10-12.

¹³³ Lindemann, *Zeit*, 235.

¹³⁴ Haupt, *Epheser*, 247.

¹³⁵ This is in line with the phrase "girding one's loins" which introduces the panoply (v14) and which, in view of Jn 21.18, denotes an attitude of dependence rather than self-confidence. There is also an interesting parallel with Jn 13.1-4 where Jesus, knowing that "the hour had come", girds his loins with a towel and washes his disciples' feet. Possibly the girding indicated the seriousness of the impending "hour". Similarly, "girding with truth" in Eph 6 may indicate the preparation for the possibility of the individual's day of death at the hands of the opposing powers.

can be employed to make up the gaps in our knowledge of the background of Ephesians. The latter would be methodologically unacceptable. However, the question may be asked whether the use of Isaiah in Eph 6 was triggered by the perceived parallels in religious climate between Israel's impending captivity experience—from the narrative point of view of the prophet—and the experience of Christian believers in Western Asia Minor. Rocheberg-Halton have shown some specific links between the Babylonian astrological phenomena and challenges encountered by the Israelites during captivity, on the one hand, and some aspects of the pagan Greco-Roman background of Western Asia Minor—the dominating city of which was of course Ephesus—on the other.¹³⁶ Such links include divination, the association of certain powers with planetary spheres¹³⁷ and stars, zodiacs, horoscopes and various forms of magic.¹³⁸

Allusions to the Prophet's message for the Israelites who experienced the challenges and pressures of Babylonian religious beliefs would have lent themselves to the author of Ephesians.¹³⁹ Such language as in ch 6.10,14-17 would have been especially forceful if the assumption of a not insignificant Jewish contingent among the addressees proved correct. We may assume that Jewish readers or hearers would have picked up the echo of the Prophet's scathing attack against the Babylonian astrological powers to an extent which probably cannot be presupposed for gentile God-fearers or proselytes. Given the historical line of continuity between Babylonian astrology and at least some aspects of Western Asia Minor religious practices, it is entirely conceivable that the links elucidated by Rocheberg-Halton approximately reflect the religio-historical context of the author's intended audience as well.

¹³⁶ Rocheberg-Halton, "Astrology", 51-62. See also Bultmann's still useful *Christianity*, 173-84.

¹³⁷ For the relevant Hekalot literature see Schürer, *History* II, 362.

¹³⁸ Arnold's evidence shows that converts to the Christian faith would have found it especially difficult to reconcile their faith with the daily demands of life in a pagan society pervaded by such forces. The temptation to give in to the pressures of society would have been comparable to those facing Israel in Babylonian captivity.

¹³⁹ It is worth comparing, for instance, the significance of the *name* and *voces magicæ* in the Ephesian grammata (Aune, "Practices", 1549) with the emphasis on the name in Isa 40.26 (cf Eph 1.19,21; 6.10); compare also the "squeaking and gibbering of wizards" criticised by the Prophet in Isa 8.19.

CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSIONS

It is now time to draw together the findings of the present study.¹ The underlying thesis has been that we can only do justice to the deliberate and diverse use of Scriptural traditions in Ephesians by conducting an in-depth study of the way Israel's Scriptures were employed by the author. While there has been a deluge of examinations of Paul's use of Scripture,² Ephesians has for too long been excluded from such investigations, mainly for reasons of suspected pseudonymity.³ Second, it was hoped that such a study would contribute to our appreciation of the author's religio-cultural profile. In the past scholars have concentrated almost exclusively on assumed hellenistic influences on the author, without acknowledging the predominance of Israel's Scriptures among the traditions employed.⁴ Third, the attempt had to be made, however cautiously, to gain some insights into the community addressed by examining the use of OT traditions. Fourth, it seemed desirable to pursue the possibility of comparing at least in some instances the author's hermeneutic with some examples of Paul's appropriations of Scripture. The bearing such a study could have on the authorship debate has already been demonstrated by Lincoln.

The general observation may be reiterated that, as elsewhere in the NT, the author of Ephesians has been found to have based his appropriations of Scripture largely on Septuagintal versions. There is little evidence to suggest any significant recourse to Hebrew texts

¹ I shall not repeat here those conclusions which are specific to individual instances of Biblical appropriation and which have been summarised at the end of each chapter respectively.

² Most notably and recently the studies by Koch, *Schrift* and Hays, *Echoes*.

³ A notable exception has been Lincoln's article "Use" which has frequently been interacted with above. To a lesser extent it was also possible to refer to Barth's excursus on the use of individual Scriptural verses in Ephesians (*Ephesians*) and also Maurer, "Hymnus", Sampley, *Flesh* and Miletic, *Flesh*. Lindemann's section on the OT in Ephesians (*Aufhebung*) proved less useful in that the author argued dogmatically for a minimal influence of Israel's Scriptures on Ephesians.

⁴ For two valuable overviews of traditions in Ephesians see Barth, "Traditions" and Gnlika, "Traditionen".

although this can by no means be ruled out. Similarly, the author does not appear to have had knowledge of Targumic traditions.

THE PREVALENCE AND FUNCTION OF SCRIPTURAL TRADITIONS

At the end of a study such as this there would appear to be no need to stress yet again the prevalence of OT traditions in the letter studied. It is done nevertheless, mainly to emphasise that, in regard to the author's ability to incorporate material from Israel's Scriptures, Ephesians in no way lags behind the majestic Pauline epistles to the Romans and the Galatians. This in itself has very little bearing on the authorship question. Nor is this to imply that Ephesians cannot be fruitfully studied on the basis of the Qumran findings (Kuhn), the gnostic sources (Pokorny) or even by comparing it to Stoic teaching or what has come to be called 'hellenistic Judaism' (Gnilka). But this must not cloud our appreciation of the most predominant and deliberate source of influence on Ephesians, the Jewish Bible. Valuable as the studies offered by the scholars mentioned are, it is regrettable that much scholarship took place at the expense of the interplay between OT Vorlage and Ephesian appropriation.

More specifically it can be noted that many of the occurrences of Scriptural material in Ephesians coincide with strategically important sections of the epistle. Ch 1.20-23 links the majestic introductory eulogy (ch 1.3-14) and the intercessory prayer which follows (ch 1.15-19) with the more 'down-to-earth' section on the background of the addressed readers (ch 2.1ff). Ch 2.13-17 forms the theological and literary centre-piece of the major discussion of Jewish-gentile relationships. Ch 4.8 prefaces the important passage on the gifts to the church. Ch 4.25-30 leads into the extended ethical exhortation which applies much of what has been set out theologically in the first half of the epistle. That same section is summed up poignantly with the help of OT motifs in ch 5.14. The last section of the letter's main body consists of the household codes which break down naturally into three parts. The first of these clearly climaxes around ch 5.31f, the second also centres around definite Scriptural quotations (ch 6.2f).⁵ The picture is completed, thirdly, by the summary of ch 6.14-17 which is characterised by the pervasive presence of motifs from Isaiah. To call the use of Israel's Scriptures in Ephesians "incidental" (Lindemann) is at best to ignore the obvious. This study has shown

⁵ Whether the third part is also in some indirect way reminiscent of the Pentateuch (Lev 25.43; cf Eph 6.9) fell outside the scope of this investigation.

that the author employed OT material both deliberately and carefully. He displayed no interest in eliminating the seams created by the insertion of traditional material into his discourse. At the same time he did not press the OT material to an extent which would have prevented gentile readers from appreciating the text as it stands.

Hermeneutically it was interesting to note that especially in the theological first half of the epistle the OT is used primarily ecclesiologically, with christology being a function of ecclesiology. This coincides essentially with the findings of one of the latest publications on the use of the OT by Paul.⁶ In the more ethically oriented second half of the letter, Scriptural material appears to have been employed mainly with a view to underpinning the ethical continuity between Israel's Bible and being 'in Christ'. Such reassurance—for Jewish Christian believers?—became necessary because of the author's pointed denial of the continuing 'legal' validity of the Torah.

When considering the appropriation of OT material in Ephesians, the temptation of over-classification must be resisted. Not only are there insufficient instances—due to the brevity of the epistle—to allow for meaningful classification, the diversity displayed is much too great to be reflected properly by labels. At the end of ch 1 we find what could be called implied interpretation and typology. In ch 2 the author shows awareness of what he perceived to be a fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. In ch 4 he reiterates a probably early Christian polemical imitation and re-application of a competing (mis-) understanding of Ps 68. Ethical instruction lies at the heart of OT occurrences later in the same chapter and at the beginning of ch 6. At the end of ch 5 the Scriptures are used to underline the theological and practical implications for marriage of being in Christ. Sometimes (ch 5.18) the influence is, if at all deliberate, restricted to the level of *languae*. On other occasions the writer appears to have selected OT passages in a way that suggests to the discerning reader some correspondence between Israel's experience and the life of the church under the Roman Empire (ch 6.10ff).

⁶ Hays, *Echoes*, 84-121. Essentially the observation that in Ephesians christology becomes a function of ecclesiology had already been made by Käsemann ("Problem", 120). By arguing along these lines he sought to maintain his view that Ephesians is "early catholic"—for Käsemann: moving towards the definition of a great universal church—despite the absence of, for instance, any emphasis on the sacraments in this letter—no mention of the eucharist; only one clear mention of baptism [ch 4.5]. Lincoln, "Theology", 138 differentiates more by saying that it is "not so much that Christology is swallowed up by ecclesiology as that ecclesiology is thoroughly Christological."

On the basis of these observations it was possible to draw other conclusions about the author's hermeneutic, the intended recipients' situation and the authorship debate.

JEWISH MEMBERS OR GOD-FEARERS AMONG THE ADDRESSEES

One of the prevailing modern views on the purpose of Ephesians goes back to Käsemann who argued that the letter primarily aims to admonish gentile Christians not to ignore their Jewish inheritance. On the basis of the present study this view is in need of modification, not least because it ignores the author's explicit (ch 2.13-17) and implicit (ch 4.8-10) Torah and Halakah criticism. Käsemann also ignored the writer's subtle use of Israel's Scriptures which is best explained on the presupposition that a significant portion of the recipients had sufficient knowledge of these Scriptures to appreciate the thrust of the quotations and allusions employed. It could of course be argued that former proselytes, God-fearers or gentile Judaisers would have been in such a position. But the ethnic thrust of ch 2.11ff would seem to militate somewhat against this solution. It may be preferable to assume that the intended community of addressees consisted not purely, though predominantly, of gentile Christians and possibly former proselytes and God-fearers, but also of a number of ethnic Jewish followers of Christ.⁷

Additionally any theory about the epistle's audience must also take into account the author's perceived need to counterbalance his salvation-historically motivated criticism of the Torah as a continually valid covenant document by emphasising the ethical continuity between living and being in Christ and the covenants of promise. Again this calls for the assumption that the writer was careful not to provide unwitting support to Judaistic sceptics of the gospel by giving the impression of ethical laxity. The charge of Christian ethical libertinism had to be eliminated at the outset; hence the author's occasional use of Pentateuchal material for underlining ethical teaching. The written Torah may no longer be binding, but the

⁷ To argue for an exclusively gentile community seems to ignore the rationale underlying ch 2.11ff. Barth, for instance, attempts to diffuse the strong statements of ch 2.15 and regards the author's criticism as directed against misusing the Torah or against the oral laws which had been added to the written Torah (*Ephesians*, 287-91). But the author himself makes at no point in ch 2 such a distinction. His phraseology leaves no doubt that he is thinking of the Torah given to Moses at Sinai. Even if Barth were right, the fact remains that ch 2 presupposes that the Jewish-gentile debate is still a live issue. Hence the letter may have to be explained on the basis of a mixed community.

underlying ethical teaching offers nonetheless valuable parameters: children, for instance, continue to be expected to honour their parents.

We saw that historically the assumption of a strong and widespread presence of Jews in Western Asia Minor throughout the first century is not only plausible, but almost certainly correct. For Ephesians to make provision for the dialogue between Jewish and gentile followers of Christ would not, therefore, be surprising.

AUDIENCE-CRITICISM⁸ AND THE RELIGIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND

In recent decades there has been a steady trickle of studies attempting to elucidate the background of the recipients of Ephesians. There has been the argument that Ephesians is a post-Pauline attempt to counter the increasing institutionalisation of churches towards the end of the first and at the beginning of the second century AD and to return to the "liberal" gospel of Paul (Fischer). Others who worked with the same texts have turned this view entirely on its head (Merklein). The more recent study by Arnold perhaps leads the way in that it provides a fruitful engagement with a wealth of relevant sources in the area of mystery religions, magical papyri and astrology. With the help of these sources Arnold paints a realistic picture of the religious and cultural milieu of the letter's audience.

In the present study I have attempted on occasions to relate the author's use of the Scriptures to Arnold's findings on the *Sitz im Leben* of this epistle. In particular there emerged structural parallels between the situation addressed by the Prophet Isaiah—the main OT source for the author of Ephesians—and the likely environment of the recipients of Ephesians. The communities envisaged suffered under foreign dominion and were in danger of succumbing to foreign religious influences. Astrology appears to have played a significant part not only in the environment of Israel's captivity, but equally in the religious climate of first century Western Asia Minor. It was inevitable that those for whom this letter was intended should have been challenged by such forces. It was equally inevitable that the language of the letter reflects the author's awareness of such encounters (Arnold). To this I would now add that the extensive use

⁸ The term as I use it is not to be confused with *reader-response hermeneutics*. Whereas the latter discovers interpretative communities as an almost limitless store house for a multiplicity of meanings, the present study has built on a hermeneutic of authorial intent. *Audience-criticism* I take to mean the attempt to use the text to unearth more details about the intended recipients than are accessible via secondary sources.

of Isaiah throughout the epistle ought to be seen as an attempt to convey the author's message of warning against such pagan influences.

However, there is another audience-critical dimension which goes significantly beyond Arnold's study and for which I have repeatedly used the term Torah mysticism.⁹ Moses and the Torah played a significant role in various forms of astro-magic and Jewish mysticism (Meeks, Scholem). It is quite possible that Ephesians urged some of its addressees—whether God-fearers, former proselytes or Jews—to decide between their Torah heritage and its potential for mystical misuse on the one side, and the Law-free gospel on the other. It may be that the problem of mysticism highlighted by Arnold and the problem of Torah observance pointed out above were unconnected phenomena. But it is intrinsically more likely that we are here dealing with two sides of the same coin. I would therefore suggest a setting for part of the Ephesian readership similar to the religious climate elucidated by Meeks in his discussion of the Moses traditions.¹⁰ Ephesians makes it plain that true enlightenment cannot be achieved via mystical exploitations of the Torah, but through Christ alone.

Lastly, a study the panoply passage of Eph 6 revealed that the intended audience may well have suffered oppression under the dominant pagan powers to such an extent that the possibility of death in the arena could not be ruled out. It is at least possible that the metaphors used in the panoply section reflect not only the Roman armour but also an arena setting. If this proves correct, the implication might be that the letter was intended to be taken—among other places?—to a major city with arena facilities. But this must remain conjecture as we do not know enough about the required facilities at the time. In any case, there would have been considerable pressures on Christian converts to assimilate to the conventions of the dominating pagan culture. This is not dissimilar to the pressures experienced by Israel in Babylonian exile. Quite possibly it was this structural parallel which prompted the author to revert repeatedly to Isaiah's message.

⁹ Lincoln, *Ephesians*, speaks of *Moses mysticism* (p243). Another possible term would be *Torah gnosticism*.

¹⁰ Meeks, *Prophet-King*. See especially Meek's discussions of Moses' mystical ascents (pp122ff; 130; 156), Moses as legislator (pp132; 294), Moses' enthronement and coronation at the Sinai event (pp205-9; 232-6; 295; 299) and Moses' eschatological role (pp211; 297).

THE AUTHOR'S HERMENEUTICS

I have already pointed out the essentially ecclesiocentric thrust of the author's use of Israel's Scriptures. Second, we have seen his relatively wide variety of OT usages, ranging from bluntness to fine subtlety.¹¹ Third, it emerged that the author's approach was governed by two complementary conventions: despite the lack of an introductory formula those among the audience with a firm grounding in Israel's Bible would have been able to pick up the subtleties involved in some OT appropriations; gentile believers who had not been God-fearers would not have been able to detect the finer nuances, but could still make sense of the incorporated OT text as it stands in its NT co-text. Fourth, where the author employs explicit introductory formulas such as *διὸ λέγει*, in all likelihood he makes use of early Christian appropriations or even polemic adaptations of Scripture. Fifth, the author's hermeneutic is not characterised by simplistic Christianisation of OT texts, nor by employing Jewish 'rules of interpretation', such as *midrash* or *peshet*.¹² A considerably more important consideration on his part appears to have been the conviction that ethical parenthesis can be suitably underlined by highlighting its continuity with OT phraseology. Sixth, the writer happily held together the abolition of the Torah as a covenant-regulating document on the one hand and its value as a moral guideline on the other. Lastly, one of his major premises is that the new creation stands not in opposition to the old; rather it forms the extension of the latter. Being in Christ—such as being married *in Christ*—adds a new dimension to 'natural existence'. *Life with Christ* is here regarded as a fundamental enhancement of *life before Christ*. It is for this hermeneutical ingredient that the author reserved the term mystery.

EPHESIANS AND COLOSSIANS

The relationship between Ephesians and Colossians was not at the centre of this investigation. Nevertheless, there are important implications for this area of research which has of late been somewhat neglected. It is well known that most scholars regard Ephesians as non-Pauline. One problem with this is the curious

¹¹ For a similar variety in the undisputed Pauline letters see Koch, *Schrift*, 258-85.

¹² For a brief but useful discussion of the unsuitability of terms such as rules and *midrash/peshet* in this context cf Hays, *Echoes*.

verbatim overlap between the references to Tychicus in both letters (Col 4.7f and Eph 6.21f). Why would an imitator of the apostle have quoted phrases which are far too situation-related to be re-applicable in a different letter and situation? A less uncertain assumption, which is again shared by most, is that of the Colossian priority as far as its date of writing is concerned. This in itself does little to shed light on the reasons for either letter, but it can be combined with an important observation of this investigation: more than once we saw that Ephesians draws on material from the Colossian *Vorlage* and deliberately enriches it with OT traditions. There must be reasons for this, and one of the most straightforward option appears to be the assumption that Ephesians may well be a re-written version of Colossians, but for a more Jewish-minded audience. This proposal would be particularly attractive in combination with the 'Laodicean hypothesis'.¹³ Whereas it is impossible to demonstrate a significant Jewish presence in Colossae at the likely time of writing Colossians (60-65AD?), such a presence in Laodicea, among other cities,¹⁴ is beyond doubt. It is therefore by no means implausible to assume that, having written Colossians, the same author decided to address other churches in a similarly syncretistic Western Asia Minor environment, albeit with a more Jewish component to it. The difference between these two letters is not primarily one in basic content or even style, but in contextualisation. Ephesians reiterates much of what is already contained in Colossians, but it does so in interaction with Jewish traditions, traditions which the intended audience probably was expected to be familiar with. This expectation appears to be absent from Colossians, but its appreciation by commentators may well be vital for understanding the reasons for Ephesians¹⁵

¹³ Cf above pp5f.

¹⁴ Ephesians may well have been intended as a circular letter.

¹⁵ I have presented this proposal in some detail in Moritz, "Reasons".

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